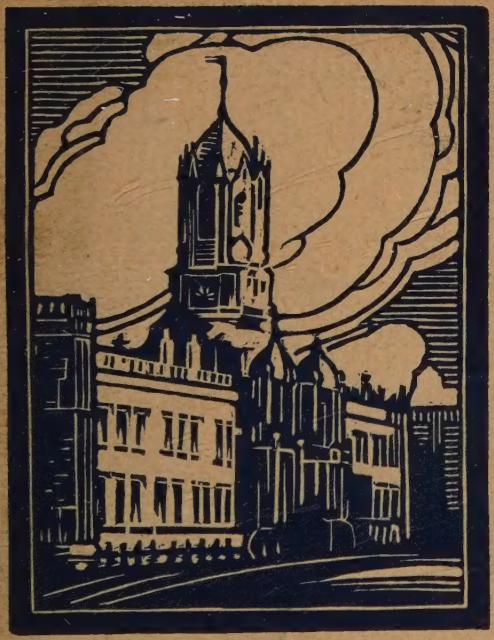

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ANNIE AND JANE TAYLOR

From a painting by their Father

JANE TAYLOR

PROSE AND POETRY

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

F. V. BARRY

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INTRODUCTION

A CENTURY has passed since the death of Jane Taylor, and her name is almost forgotten. Some few of the older generation may remember the children's rhymes which were the first literary ventures of Jane and her sister Ann; fewer still could be sure which of them wrote "Twinkle, twinkle——", though every one knows it in parody. Yet our grandmothers were brought up on "Original Poems" and Hymns that echoed the rhythm of Dr. Watts. Some doubtless had copies of *The Contributions of Q. Q.* (Jane Taylor's papers reprinted from the *Youth's Magazine*) which ran into many editions, or her novel *Display*, first published in the year of Waterloo.

She suffered the fate of those who rate life higher than literature; in a life wholly given to the service of her family and friends she wrote little and never developed her powers. Moreover her writing was mostly confined to a strait path of moral purpose. Even when she allowed herself to stray she walked sedately where she might have danced.

Yet the very change that has overtaken ideas of nature and education in these days gives a new interest to Jane Taylor's thoughts. There is something refreshing to a generation sated with romantic reading in the crisp turn of her rhymes; and when for a moment she escapes from her self-imposed restraints her droll or emphatic tones give a true impression of character.

The books for little children (all written in partnership

with Ann) belonged to her own youth. The first volume of *Original Poems for Infant Minds* appeared in 1804, when Jane was twenty-one; then, in 1806 and 1808, came *Rhymes for the Nursery* and *Hymns for Infant Minds*. These, with a few children's miscellanies, are all that remain of her early writings. By the time her one novel was published she was thirty-two (past middle age as it would seem to her); in the spring of the following year she finished her *Essays in Rhyme* and under the mysterious signature "Q. Q." began the series of short essays, tales, and verses in which for the next seven years she gave her sane judgements and whimsical counsels to youth.

There is no portrait of Jane Taylor that her friends would have accepted as a true one; none at any rate later than her father's painting of Ann and Jane as children. "In truth", wrote her brother Isaac, "the expression of her face was of that kind which is the most difficult to be seized by the pencil, for it was the expression of the finest feelings habitually veiled from observation. Her features were delicately formed and regular; her stature below the middle size; every movement bespoke the activity of her mind, and a peculiar archness and sprightliness of manner gave significance to all she did".

This brother found that he could not write about Jane without including the family. His "Memoir", published with a collection of her letters in the first volume of *The Family Pen*, is the chief record of her life. To this the *Autobiography* of Mrs. Gilbert (their eldest sister Ann) adds life and colour. It was Ann who wrote at eighty: "The feeling of being a grown woman, to

say nothing of an old woman, does not come naturally to me." She was sixty-six when she began her *Autobiography*, and gossips about their childhood as if it were yesterday.

Out of the family background thus prepared by the two who knew her best Jane steps of her own accord. Her authentic picture grows out of shy hints about herself: in letters, in sketches, or implied in the setting of her books; but the background interprets and makes it visible.

The three eldest children, Ann, Jane, and Isaac, were born in London, where their father, Isaac Taylor, followed the family craft of engraving; but the struggle with poverty proved unequal. Before Jane was three they had moved to the out-of-the-way village of Lavenham in Suffolk, where a big house and garden could be had for £6 a year. "The postman's cart, covered in for passengers, made its enlivening entrée every day from Sudbury; and the London waggon nodded and grated in about once a week."

Yet here were all the surroundings of a happy childhood: a garden with grass plot and "labyrinths of flowering shrubs"; a summer-house open to the fields; fruit trees, espaliered walks, and such a bush of honeysuckle as Ann scarcely remembered to have seen.

Jane's love of quiet places and gardens remained with her through life, and grew stronger with experience. The house, full of rooms and corners, seems to have fitted the garden. Ann makes a Dutch picture of the small, pleasant room where they lived: her father's high desk at which he always stood to engrave in a corner between the fire and a large window; her mother

seated on the opposite side, and between them the children at their little table. There were no nurseries at Lavenham, but the children lived happily with their parents, for they were never humoured, and thus, says Ann, " fell in with more than is always included in the catalogue of school-learning at so much a quarter ".

They grew up with a taste for books and pictures. Their mother's custom of reading at table (which Ann does not defend) had come of her fear that the work of a large family would prevent her from sharing her husband's interests ; but the younger Isaac remembered that the books read at breakfast were chosen chiefly for the younger children.

Moreover, family education as the Taylors understood it included the friendship of other families. They knew the cottagers by their Christian names ; the farmer, the blacksmith, and the baker were among their friends. Nor were they, like some country-bred children of their generation, quite cut off from the outside world. Their father's frequent journeys to London kept them in touch with wider interests, and all but the youngest could stretch their imaginations to meet the story of the French Revolution in the weekly newspaper.

As good dissenters the Taylors had no traffic with Rousseau's theories, but in practice they gave their children a more natural education than many professed followers of Rousseau. With much of the old Puritan temper they had more of wisdom and sympathy. Imaginative plays were not only allowed but encouraged, and they never confused the children's innocent pleasures with the distractions of worldly persons.

Ann's account of their life at Lavenham brings the

little figures of the portrait dancing out of their frame. Here is Jane, "the saucy, lively, entertaining little thing", placed on the kneading-board at the baker's shop to recite, preach, narrate; here again at Mr. Blackadder's, "the life and fun of the farmer's hearth"; and (somewhat older) at home enjoying her favourite pastime of whipping a top while she composed tales and dramas. Jane, "the spirited foremost" in every youthful plan, was the chief inventor of their plays. Her earliest efforts, "Aunt and Niece", "The Miss Bandboxes", "The Two Miss Parks", and the humbler romance of "Moll and Bet", seem to have been derived from moral tales, but life and a suggestion of roguery was there as in *Q. Q.* Ann played the elder part in "Aunt and Niece" and perhaps was older in these days than as the grandmother of the *Autobiography*. Jane, for all her acknowledged talents, was the more diffident of the two, and through all the years of their literary partnership put her sister first. It was only after Ann's marriage that Jane was recognised as the genius. Then the publishers fell into a way of announcing Ann's best things as "by Jane Taylor". Ann's comment is characteristic: "Dear Jane never needed to steal, while I could not afford to lose."

The removal to Colchester brought many changes. Their strenuous father now undertook the full work of an Independent Minister, took apprentices, and began to train his children as engravers. Here the *Autobiography* almost loses itself in digressions. Ann's pencil is busy with the life and movement of the town, the beauty of the surrounding country and portraits of new friends; but Isaac draws clear pictures of the busy household working many hours a day at their intricate craft.

Jane was by this time thirteen, playful, imaginative, alive to every new experience. She and Ann, already schooled in housewifery, now helped their mother and served their apprenticeship turn by turn.

The work was hard, the long hours, to their mother's thinking, positively harmful; but the younger ones could refresh themselves with a running fire of jests; Ann in her placid way enjoyed it, and Jane, looking out of the diamond-shaped panes at a forbidden garden, took it as matter of duty and sent her mind wandering.

" In our simplicity ", says her brother, " we believed that the world around us was travelling along parallel roads at the same speed ". Yet they contrived by some lost art of saving seconds to make new friends.

At fifteen Jane was the youngest member of a Society for reading original essays and what Isaac, in the grand manner, called " the promotion of intellectual improvement ". There was no pedantry in Jane. Her genius for friendship grew in this new circle, and doubtless she enjoyed the stimulus of friendly criticism; but neither at this time nor later did she accept her friends' estimate of her talents. Her chosen recreation, the writing of poems for children, was shared, like her first scribbling of plays and verses at Lavenham, with Ann.

They were not free till eight o'clock, but as Ann remarked, a flying thought could be caught even in the midst of work, or a fancy " pinioned " to a piece of waste paper. The first " Original Poems " were written upon the margins of engraved plates and published almost by accident.

Ann's contributions of enigmas and charades to the *Minor's Pocket Book* had led Jane and Isaac to venture

into print; and a notable letter to the elder Isaac from Harvey and Darton, the Quaker publishers, opened a delightful byway of letters to Ann and Jane. There is nothing to show that these little pieces were first submitted, like Miss Edgeworth's tales, to the children of the family, yet they recall certain figures in the *Autobiography*: Jemima, the eleventh and youngest sister, "in all respects the best looking of the family"; the six years old Decimus who died of scarlet fever (a time of trouble which proved Jane's courage and devotion); the droll, inconsequent Jeffereys.

The first tiny volume of "Original Poems" took the nurseries of 1804 by storm. The title-page, hall-marked with a motto from Dr. Watts, and describing the authors as "Several Young Persons", excited curiosity; the preface, respectfully inscribed to Parents and "very affectionally to that interesting little race—the race of children", was irresistible.

A second volume was ordered before Christmas; a year later the two chief contributors, finding themselves unexpectedly among the most popular children's writers, ventured into the field alone with rhymes and hymns. There had been no such measures since Dr. Watts. Old nursery songs, revived from time to time, had gone the way of old "histories", and the "great writers of little books"—Mrs. Barbauld and Miss Edgeworth—were justly content with their mastery of prose.

A great-grandmother of the Taylors had as a child been taken upon the knee of Dr. Watts and received from his hand a copy of the *Divine Songs for Children*. Ann and Jane used the old rhythms "with a difference". Nearly a century before *A Child's Garden of Verses*, they

sang of moon and stars, flowers and creatures, of child's play in house and garden. "The Wind" and "The Cow" had their prototypes in *Original Poems* and *Rhymes for the Nursery*; any reader who opens his *Child's Garden* at "A Good Boy" or "System" or "The Whole Duty of Children" will find in Ann and Jane Taylor the great aunts-in-literature of Louis Stevenson.

The skill consists, as Goldsmith remarked, "in making little fishes talk like little fishes"; and this may be done with or without a "moral". Jane's method gives the secret of her charm. "I try to conjure up some child into my presence", she told Ann, "address her suitably, as well as I am able, and when I begin to flag, I say to her, 'There, love, now you may go'". There could be no better recipe for the making of children's books.

When James Montgomery praised the first efforts of the "Associate Minstrels", he called Ann "the queen of the Assembly——the first unquestionably among those who write for children, and not the last by hundreds of those who write for men"; yet he found Jane "very delicate and sprightly", and noted her "tender playfulness".

Jane's pieces, fresh and crisp as Miss Edgeworth's prose, have the more individual note. Her conventional pictures—"Morning", "Evening", and the rest, framed to fit chosen spaces on the Nursery wall—have a light and colour of their own; her portrait-types—"The Shepherd Boy", "The Gleaner"—mostly arranged in pairs or sets of four, have each some distinguishing note: Colin's "soft pipe", the "little blue apron" of the gleaner. Even her cautionary rhymes are not as other cautionary rhymes which have no conscious humour.

She draws an apple tree, a bird, a violet, and straightway the wind is stirring in the branches, the bird twitters, the flower droops "in sweet humility". As for her beasts, a child understands their language, knows them as friends even when they find fault with him, repeats their sermons, never for a moment doubts they are alive.

If any captious patron of nursery art deny that these pieces are in the strict sense "original", he must admit them as classics. The little public of to-day respond like their forbears to these live measures. Some even enjoy the novelty of a "moral".

"Remember", said Dr. Johnson, upon Mrs. Thrale's commending some little book, "that the parents buy the books and the children never read them". Walter Scott had a sure touchstone for the Taylor rhymes. "My young people", he tells Josiah Conder, "are busy with Rhymes for the Nursery, and it is perhaps the highest proof of their being admirably adapted for their benevolent purpose that the little students have most of them by heart already."

After this Ann and Jane were never without commissions of some sort. Engraving was still their chief business, writing no more than a pleasant pastime for which their father was willing to grant them an additional half hour; yet the success of their books did more than break down a parental prejudice against authorship for girls. It set the whole family writing. Their mother (at fifty) began to issue her gentle counsels to other mothers; their father produced many books for youth, among which were *The Biography of a Brown Loaf* and *Advice to the Teens*; the younger Isaac was afterwards well known as a philosophical writer, and Jeffereys, who

grew up as great a lover of children as Jane herself, was also a writer of children's books.

There were times, as the letters show, when the life at Colchester hardly satisfied the searching and sensitive mind of Jane Taylor—when she fell into moods of depression; but as her father's work became better known and the times more prosperous, there were more frequent holidays. Ann talks of "Gipsy Rambles", "exciting visits to London and others to Suffolk little less delightful"; of meetings with James Montgomery, Mrs. Barbauld, and Constable.

A visit to London in Jane's nineteenth year brought her into a wider and more varied group of her own age, among whom were her lifelong friends the cousins Josiah and Sarah Luck Conder. The little book of the "Associate Minstrels" which earned the praise of Walter Scott and Miss Edgeworth was planned by Josiah, Ann, and Jane during a walk from Colchester to Nayland on a summer evening. It is clear from her letters that Jane wrote to please these friends, and cared more about being liked by them than admired by famous persons.

In the Memoir her letters begin with a little exodus from Colchester in the Autumn of 1803. The garrison were then actually prepared for a French landing, and in the general alarm and excitement the two youngest children were sent down to Lavenham for safety, with Jane and Isaac in charge. Such an adventure would have broken the routine of most families, but this little offshoot of the Taylor household settled down with extraordinary self-possession to the hours and customs of its original. Jane's letters to her mother show her rising between six and seven, doing the greater part of the

housework before breakfast, teaching the children and giving almost the usual amount of time to her engraving. With all this she contrived in the winter evenings to go on with her poetry for children. It is precisely what Miss Edgeworth in like circumstances would have done.

Here the biographer stands aside, contenting himself with occasional remarks and explanations. He is wise. Jane Taylor comes into the foreground and speaks for herself.

Those who delight in the keen and humorous phrases of her books may find the letters disappointing. The spirit of jest and youthful satire is not only repressed but criticised; there is nothing that can be called gossip. In *Display* Jane is not so preoccupied with her moral as to avert her eyes from the rose colour and the pale blue sarcinet; but the Puritan views of her correspondents gave her no such excuse as the vanities of a character in fiction; moreover the Taylor children had been brought up to think and listen—never, even at meals, to enjoy the inconsequent talk that is the essence of letters.

Nor had Jane Taylor the many-sided interests which make Miss Edgeworth's letters such good reading, nor Miss Edgeworth's wide experience of life; for her adventures were chiefly those of thought and imagination. And yet hers are real letters, written with enjoyment to her friends and marked in every line by some sign of character.

There is little to tell of change or achievement. She moves with the family to Ongar in the spring of 1812, gives up her regular engraving, visits friends and spends some time with Ann in London, trying to acquire those

"lighter accomplishments" which Mr. Taylor had not included in his plan of education.

After Lavenham the nearest approach to adventure is the visit of Ann and Jane to Ilfracombe, where Isaac had been ordered for his health: a transition from quiet fields to the sea, hills, and visionary distances; the corresponding though less revolutionary phase of new acquaintance. In the same year Ann's romantic marriage breaks the long partnership of the sisters.

Jane's second visit with Isaac to Devonshire runs into two years in the little Cornish town of Marazion overlooking Mount's Bay. Here she published her novel, wrote her *Essays in Rhyme* and signed her first paper as "Q. Q.". From that time the most stirring change is from the Castle House at Ongar to New House, its neighbour over the fields. Then comes the gradual ebbing of her strength, the illness so like Jane Austen's, borne through its long course with a marvellous and tranquil courage.

Of her work she says much, though it is never her chief concern. The playful contrast (in an early letter to Luck Conder) between Jane Taylor of the morning and Jane Taylor of the evening is not to be taken literally; she feels nothing of the implied contempt for that "active, handy little body who can make beds or do plain work and now and then takes a fancy for drawing, etc."; but the other who "never troubles her head with these menial affairs" is concerned with the happier adventures of her pen. The escape was not from household work, which she seems to have enjoyed, but from the task-work of engraving. She confesses the burden of her apprenticeship even though in the next

line she is reminding herself of her youth, remarking how often she is happy without reason, arguing that she will never know happier days than these. In winter she gets " quite rusty ", almost forgets that the world reaches further than from one end of the house to the other, and would be utterly despondent were it not that her thoughts " take an occasional flight to regions more remote ".

She is far from disdaining what her friends called the " elegant art ". Her remarks indeed show that she understood better than they the difference between creative art and craftsmanship, but there was no feeling of superiority; she distrusted her own powers. " The more I see of myself and of the performances of others ", she writes, " the more I am convinced that Nature never intended me for an artist. I look at the girls in the milliners' shops with envy because their business and their genius are on a level. *I think it is what I shall come to at last* ".

Unlike Miss Edgeworth, Jane Taylor never could write in a crowded room. Her father believed in giving his children rooms of their own for prayer and quiet thinking, and at Colchester Jane had her " study ",—no more than a disused attic from which she had cleared out the lumber, but it gave her " a peep of landscape over the roofs " and " a tract of sky ".

" To me this is invaluable ", she tells a fellow-poet. " You may now expect me to do wonders ! "

Her letters from Cornwall show the same enjoyment of her room with its windows open towards the bay and passing ships.

She had never set aside home duties for the pleasures of writing. In the early days she had sometimes looked

upon writing as an occupation out of touch with life; and at Marazion she writes to her mother: "I do not wish to fly from family cares; one of the satisfactions of returning to you for a time would be that I might share them with you."

An early letter to Josiah Conder shows that already her questionings had led her to discount mere "cleverness" and youthful ambition. "I am tired of wishing to be clever; especially I am weary of the sickening fatiguing struggle for competition." Conder, praising her contributions to the "Associate Minstrels", had accused her of a morbid humility; but Jane loved her friends too well to judge their performances by the standard she applied to her own. "I allow my pieces to rank as the leaves", she explains, "which are, you know, always reckoned a necessary and even pleasing part of a bouquet".

Very characteristic is her way of taking praise. The "Associate Minstrels", thanked by Walter Scott for their "beautiful poetry", felt a peculiar pleasure in the tribute of Montgomery, with whom, through Josiah Conder, they were then acquainted. Jane, greatly pleased with her own share of it, writes "in a wild hurry" to her mother, enclosing extracts from the letters; but likes Montgomery the better for preferring Ann's poetry to her own.

Of the children's hymns she writes with evident pleasure, gives the chief credit for her success to the "little imaginary being" whose language she has tried to catch, and adds: "I have failed so frequently because so frequently I was compelled to say, 'Now you may go, my dear. I shall finish the hymn myself!'"

Little as she is inclined to theorise about her books, this touchstone of Nature is her final proof; and when, in one of the Cornish letters, she commends it to her father and mother (who by that time had taken up the "Family Pen"), she does it under cover of describing her own methods.

"The moment I leave off looking at some original, I find I am writing what is tame and unnatural, or general and unimpressive. Pray do not think I am dictating or that it is in consequence of dissatisfaction with your writings—it is only because it struck me and I should be grateful for any hints in return."

She never questions the didactic purpose. It is the "real *fault*" of a real character which she is at pains to draw from Nature; and this, by way of warning, she can do "without uncharitableness".

The early letters to Josiah Conder suggest that Jane unconsciously adapted her style to his literary taste. There is a quaint Johnsonian flavour about passages like this: "I will consider myself bound, for your sake as well as for my own, better to merit those commendations which neither your politeness could entirely withhold, nor my vanity wholly dispense with."

She did not follow this pattern of her own accord; but Josiah Conder (whether it be just or no to suspect him of some pedantries) belonged to the circle of her early friendships and seems to have understood her love of poetry. Some six years later she writes to him from Marazion in simpler speech: "I am surrounded by those who know that I am—Miss Taylor; but know not that I am—'Jane'." At Colchester it is to Josiah she writes about the "days of idle romance" and summer evenings

spent on the old ivy-grown town wall, straining her eyes till they ached that she might read Thomson by moonlight. In the next line she is laughing at herself, confessing that she has learnt more about poetry while enduring "the gross vapours of tallow"; yet sees clearly that her feeling for poetry is "quite distinct from the capability for writing verse".

Jane Taylor's models, indeed, were of the eighteenth century. She shews no acquaintance with Wordsworth, and yet on leaving the scene of her childhood and youth, "would send her mind back leisurely to revisit the past" in Wordsworth's very method,—if she had not schooled herself to think retrospection "an unprofitable indulgence".

Her deep and increasing love of Nature sprang from the surroundings of her childhood. It had little to do with that enjoyment of "the glowing landscape" which she had learned from her father's lessons on the picturesque. The difference is plain when she is simply expressing her own feeling for the country: the window through which her mind escapes at night to wander among the stars, the moonshine and sunbeams that move upon her attic walls, her garden, particular trees, consoling rambles among the "high woods and springs".

There is nothing like this in her description of the "enchanting vale and village of Linmouth". She reduces the light and shadow of the hills, exquisite colours, and romantic backgrounds to the likeness of the "finest miniature"; or again can find no better comparison for the Valley of Rocks than "gigantic architectural ruins". Yet this conventional jargon was but an effort to express the inexpressible; there was essential

truth in her heart. Jane Taylor wrote nothing—she could not write—in a room that did not look out upon the open country or the sea; and when she watched those ships crossing the little bay of Marazion she described them without figure.

Signs of conflict between her natural love of beauty and her Puritan heritage are not wanting, though there could be no sin in praising the beauties of Creation. Deeper heart-searchings follow her own imaginative flights. "I do believe", she tells her friend Luck in one of the early letters, "that this habit of castle-building is very injurious to the mind. I know I have sometimes lived so much in a *castle* as almost to forget that I lived in a *house*; and while I have been carefully arranging aerial matters *there*, have left all my solid business in disorder *here*." Thus Bunyan might have argued about his reading of romances.

It is no matter for wonder that the strict doctrines in which Jane Taylor had been reared should bias her judgments, sound as these always were in essentials; but the letters prove how much more she perceived than any of her correspondents. She is uniformly gentle in dealing with those whose virtues atoned for their lack of insight, and leaves unsaid much that she cannot deny; but a perfectly sincere distrust of her own enjoyments sometimes made her subscribe to narrower views. Thus her own love of books made her the readier to agree with Eliza Forbes that "plays and (bad) novels are poisons Satan frequently insinuates"; but this very concession gave her the right to add that the few novels she had read were mostly of "a beneficial tendency" and that she would as soon read some of Miss Edgeworth's or

Miss Hamilton's novels, " with a view to moral improvement ", as Foster's essays.

Much later, when the wider experience of life in Cornwall had enlarged her sympathies, she praised *Corinne* and declared that Madame de Staël seemed to have felt everything that a susceptible mind could feel in this world. But the conflict was still there.

In the early letters her temper, naturally bright and wholesome, disperses the gloomy suggestions of her friends like a ray of light. To one who confesses to " dark and melancholy " views of life, she writes : " You do not permit yourself to receive the comforts and delights that are offered you by Providence with a merry heart, giving God thanks." Yet, like Bunyan, she magnifies the least of her failings into sins, deplores a hasty temper and even suspects her own motives for finding fault with herself, detecting beneath her very humiliation " the seeds of vanity ".

Prayer was to her " so difficult a task " that it exhausted her, body and mind ; and yet she reproaches herself with feeling " poetically rather than piously " about religion.

She confesses doubts and difficulties that never troubled her friends, but with no idea of her own deeper spiritual insight ; and while she never doubts the professions of others, dreads for herself " the unfelt technicality of religious conversation ".

The great events of the age have no place in these letters. At Lavenham she is concerned to prove to her mother that Napoleon's threats are not empty words ; but her chief interest is in the little family under her care, in those left behind in Colchester ; anywhere but

in national affairs. Reflecting on the " famous victory " of Trafalgar, she pays tribute to Nelson's " noble part ", but with her usual honesty refuses to think what the newspapers have " very obligingly thought for her ", questions the warrior's desire for glory and decides against " the trade of war ".

Like Jane Austen she was disposed to rank her own family and friends above princes. In one of her letters she draws an ironic parallel: " You and the Prince Regent have been receiving company; Father and Mother have left the Castle House; we have removed to Marazion; and Buonaparte to Elba."

In all that concerns the family she is faultless. The very faults of temper which she acknowledges are denied by the brother who knew her best. Like most sisters she feels the unequal burden of separation when her brothers go out into the world. " You, engaged in business and surrounded by friends, cannot feel as we do." But she makes the two lads (Isaac and Martin) understand how much she is their friend. " What a wide field for anxiety and distress is a large family ", she once wrote, " to every member of which one's happiness seems to cling ". Yet this anxiety helped her to forget the private troubles that show themselves here and there in her letters. In pathetic contrast to Ann's youthfulness, Jane feels the approach of age at twenty-five. Some three years later she is accusing herself of laziness because her mind is " hanging as limp as a dead leaf ", and remarking that " many a gay lady of five and forty retains more of youth ". These were signs of exhaustion that would not go unheeded nowadays; at the time they were forgotten in duties and affections.

In this little community of the family it was only natural that outsiders were sometimes regarded as foreigners. Jane often regrets thoughtless jests and unconsidered judgments, but in fact she was never harsh with anyone but herself. Her answer to the melancholy correspondent who deplores the duplicity of the world is in effect the answer of Orlando to Jacques: "I will chide no breather in the world but myself, against whom I know most faults." There was no trace of malice in the humour that played so naturally about the oddities and contradictions of her acquaintance. It is like her sense of incongruity or likeness in animals and things; but the moralist in Jane Taylor is often at cross purposes with the humorist. Until she reconciled the two by satirising faults and foibles, she almost persuaded herself that the habit of jesting was a form of original sin; but humour had a way of asserting itself at the very moment of submission. Thus (in an early letter) Jane the moralist thanks her mother for a "wholesome reprimand", acknowledging upon reflection that she should not have exercised her wit at another person's expense; but Jane the humorist cannot resist the defence: "I declare I do not despise the gentleman, and I wrote *only for my amusement*." This is the novelist's plea. Her frank enjoyment of the foibles of human nature foreshadows the author of *Display*.

Yet her humour is seldom out of tune with her prevailing mood of thoughtful tenderness. If she ridicules cant and affectation in a spirit of true comedy, she is quick to recognise beauty in character, and above all in the character of simple folk. A passage in one of the letters formulates her creed. She is speaking of her

village friends, who admire what she calls " our poor superficial acquirements ", and writes thus : " I see them living in the daily exercise of virtues and graces to which I never approached. In all that is sound, sterling, durable—in all that a heart-searching God can approve, I see how far I fall short."

These were the people Jane Taylor cared for most outside her family circle : her " Persons of Consequence ".

To reverse the accepted order and give due place to goodness and simplicity she wrote her one novel. The abstract title, *Display*, suggests the influence of Jane Austen's earlier books (*Persuasion* was not yet published); but the method is Miss Edgeworth's. The author of *Sense and Sensibility* had drawn her lessons from life ; Jane Taylor, following Miss Edgeworth, shaped the lives of her characters to fit the lesson. Yet she never betrayed her own ideal of truth to Nature. Elizabeth and Emily, like Miss Edgeworth's types of moral contrast, point the difference between affectation and sincerity ; yet each exhibits " the real faults of a real character " and not a few of its subtleties. The motto from Jurieu on the title-page of *Display* repeats the warning of the letters : " Examine thyself well ;—see if thou art not tainted with this evil." In a letter, she actually compares herself with one of her least amiable characters : " I have, like *Mrs. Palmer*, an extreme dislike of being uncomfortable, which generally disposes me to make the best of things, so that my letter gave you really a false idea if it made you think I am ' bowed down under a weight of cares '."

Jane Taylor is neither so sure of herself nor of her theories as Miss Edgeworth, nor does she allow herself Jane Austen's free enjoyment of ridicule ; but her hatred

of cant and false sentiment is as strong as theirs. Imaginary persons may bear her sharpest thrusts, and the laughter that plays round the absurdities of social pretence is never at odds with her morality, as in the letters. It is true that her pictures of fashionable life show the layman's prejudice. She drew her examples of snobbery too exclusively from one class, and was apt to exaggerate the diversions of ordinary folk into dissipations that must " indispose the mind to serious reflexion and serious engagements ". Yet she, like the Leddenhursts in *Display*, could abstain from such assemblies as the Officers' Ball without shaking her head and speaking of dancing " as containing in itself some mysterious evil which could not be explained ". There was, of course, but one sort of dancing which she could approve wholeheartedly : the kind she knew and described through the eyes of Elizabeth and Emily when, entering the room at Stokely, " they found Miss Weston playing a lively tune, to which the children were dancing by the light of the fire ". On the other hand Jane herself was not wholly insensible to " the sound of the inspiring viol ", and shows unmistakable sympathy with her Emily, who, passing the lighted assembly-room, " could scarcely forbear stepping to the well-known air ".

With all her wit, humour, and sense of pathos, Jane Taylor had no gift of sustained story-telling. Her best passages are in separate scenes touched with ironic humour, or intimate studies of character which escape the formality of moral contrast. The setting of *Display* reproduces her own surroundings in Colchester and Lavenham. The journey of the Leddenhurst family through Broadisham to Stokely reads like a page of

Ann's *Autobiography*, describing their first glimpse of the Castle House; and those detailed drawings: the market square at Broadisham before and after the coming of the soldiers, the private view from Miss Pryke's counter, the fireside and country scenes, the portraits, all bear witness to Jane's skill as an engraver.

Even more delicate are the lines of character which transform her types into individuals. Elizabeth and Emily at opposite points of the contrast are not always to be distinguished from their contemporaries. "The prospect, the picture or the poem which Emily admired with all her heart, Elizabeth admired with all her eloquence"; "Emily was going that she might see Mrs. Fellows; Elizabeth that Mrs. Fellows might see her". Here they are little more than Edgeworth types. But elsewhere Jane Taylor introduces the individual Elizabeth and Emily. An Emily whose simplicity (her chief safeguard) appears in charming unsuspected ways; who reads and feels poetry—writes it too, though her good taste saves her from "the unhappy mistake of those who perceive no difference between writing *verses* and writing *poetry*; and who accordingly go on writing verses, as many as you please—or more: which is an art as easy of attainment as that of doing cobble-stitch, or making patch-work". This Emily, who would rather have her piety called in question than make "unfelt professions", at once suggests the youthful Jane; yet she is no mere "portrait of the artist". If Jane had ever found reading the newspaper to her father a standing trial of her good-nature, she would have found small consolation in the thought of Milton's daughters; nor were her family circumstances at all comparable with

Emily's. She projected herself into the mind of an only child "not free from faults . . . sensible, modest and ingenuous, but . . . *eighteen*".

Elizabeth on her side is neither impossibly vain and selfish before her change of heart, nor wholly reformed by it. Jane Taylor accepts the fact of incomplete conversion and understands that her penitent would still pose for simple customers in the detested shop, and enjoy the surprise of others at her inappropriate occupation. The drawing of these two may owe something to Jane Austen's earlier studies of Elinor and Marianne; they have more in common with her later-published portraits of Catherine Morland and Isabella Thorpe. But Miss Austen's characters move in a different world, and enjoy a freedom undreamed of in the Leddenhurst circle. It is the wit and irony of *Display* which sometimes suggest her touch. She herself might have invented Elizabeth's excuse for accepting Lieutenant Robinson: that he *whistled* uncommonly well; but Jane Taylor's laugh is gentler. Notwithstanding Mr. Robinson's stupidity, laziness, and extravagance, she sees him as a pathetic figure. She is amused not because he was once a linen-draper, but because the trying on of a military hat decided his career. She laughs at his "usual style of sprightly dulness", at his schoolboy way of consoling himself with nuts, at his bad fiddling; but she is never indifferent. When Elizabeth, trying to atone for her neglect, asks him to play to her, the reader is touched by his surprise and pleasure. "Every human being is interesting", says Mr. Leddenhurst. Jane Taylor, naturally prone, like her Emily, to doubt this postulate, did her best by imagination and sympathy to believe it.

Thus the figures of her background are drawn with hardly less care than her chief persons. The widow Jones is no mere object of Emily's benevolence. Her unwilling migration from her old cottage to the picturesque pleasure-house adapted for her by the poetical Emily is a delicious interlude.

" ' What, don't you like it ? ' said Emily.

' Why dear, I can't mislike it ', said she, " here 's a power of trees, to be sure ! but 'twill be more lightsome come winter.' "

Emily's romantic notions here set off the truth and humour of reality ; but her practical castle-building is allowed to stand. She justifies her dreams by actual effort, and the gentle forethought which coaxed the least docile of the widow's household gods to the new dwelling has its reward :

" ' Well-a-day, there's our puss ! ' exclaimed the widow, now looking *really* pleased."

Mrs. Palmer, Elizabeth's mother, is remembered chiefly for her rapid recovery of cheerfulness after the death of her son. She speaks but three insignificant sentences before passing out of the story, but her picture, etched in a few revealing lines, remains upon the wall :—

" She had no son, it was true ; but she had her pleasant house, and handsome furniture ; luxurious fare, and a healthy appetite ; a fine person, and expensive ornaments. She could still walk, and ride and visit, and see company ; and build her grotto, and attend to her green-house, and arrange her cabinet."

Betsy Pryke (introduced as " a sharp, neat, compact, conceited looking person who kept a little haberdasher's shop in the market-place ") is another figure by no means

subdued by her small place in the design. "Her customers, in addition to their purchase, were generally favoured with a little learning gratis, while she was weighing the pins or measuring the tape; and even before those whom she could not venture to entertain with familiar discourse, some fine word or knowing remark, was dexterously dropped, to let them know *what she was*."

Even the more conventional types are touched with life: the Major's wife offering "a glass of anything" to console Elizabeth in her loss of fortune; the Major who, in the Lieutenant's predicament, "would not feel any particular reluctance to—to—engaging in *mercantile concerns*"; Miss Oliver to whom scandal has become an entertainment and mischief a recreation; whose talk "forbad the supposition of an original thought having ever by any accident strayed into her brain". Even she acquires a vicarious consequence from the fact of Mr. Leddenhurst's interest—and Emily's surprise that he should be interested.

Such minor figures repeat the motif of *Display*, and this is emphasised by the contrast of Lieutenant Robinson's prosaic sister and practical uncle: the uncle commended less by his integrity than by his unexpected sympathy with Elizabeth, the dull sister saved from contemptuous pity by her entire innocence of "display".

This use of repetition and contrast owed more to Jane's inherited sense of balance in design than to her skill as a novelist: but it suggests that, if novel-writing had appealed to her as a chief means of serving others, she could have mastered the technique.

She chose instead to colour the set pattern of verse

essays with her individual humour. But that humour never lent itself to any reasoned system of philosophy; her creed as set down is warped by prejudice. The "Essays in Rhyme" are in fact not essays at all, but satires in which she pillories "the little gentry of our narrow sphere, Who occupy a safe enclosure made Completely inaccessible to trade", and laughs again at intellectual pride and "sensibility", the "light of Nature-boasting man", the egotist "Whose I's and Me's are scatter'd in his talk, Thick as the pebbles on a gravel walk", the sentimentalist who will "Pluck a wild Daisy, moralise on that, And drop a tear for an expiring gnat".

She owes much to Pope, more to Cowper in the fashion of these rhymes, but the spirit is her own.

"Jane never wrote anything with so much zest and excitement", says her brother. "While employed on them she was almost lost to other interests: even her prevailing domestic tastes seemed forgotten, and in our daily walks she was often quite abstracted from the scene around her."

The mere pleasures of invention could not absorb her thus. Her *Essays in Rhyme* was an effort to express in the warmth of poetry thoughts that she could not set down in "naked prose". A year of serious reading and the new scenes and friendships of Marazion had quickened both thought and feeling. However little of her purpose she achieved, the book shows her more impatient than ever with things remote from life: the cultured taste that would preserve "tattered cottages" for the poor to live in, the self-deception of pleasure-seekers. No man, she insisted, could hope to gain but by the sacrifice of self; most men's preoccupations were

those of Bunyan's Man with the Muck Rake ; and their " business " was commonly a misuse of God's blessings. The " World in the Heart " discerns illusion and reality :

> The soul—perhaps in silence of the night
> Has flashes, transient intervals of light
> When things to come, beyond a shade of doubt
> In terrible reality stand out.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> *These are the moments when the mind is sane.*

Display and *Essays in Rhyme* are Jane Taylor's only books for grown-up readers. The too strenuous days of her youth were beginning to tell upon her, and the very " zest and excitement " of writing had been beyond her strength. From that time, although her mind was " teeming with projects ", she could do little beside her short contributions to the *Youth's Magazine*. This, doubtless, seemed a paltry task to some who noted the promise of her books ; but such an idea never entered Jane's head. Her one scruple in writing to order was lest it should take the life out of her work and " induce the habit of prosing " ; but the real danger lay in her didactic aim. These pieces, written at set times and shaped to fit small spaces, were in fact better suited to her style than either novels or essays. She had no liking for digression, little skill in plot-weaving or argument. The stories and dialogues of *Q. Q.* should have given scope to all her graces : the alternating humour and sadness, sudden gleams of imagination and quick sympathy. These would have touched her audience and dispelled youthful doubts and errors without explicit " morals " ; but when Jane differed from her friends she was too ready to find herself mistaken, to accept their ruling. She put off her natural gaiety and assumed the

didactic tones which the two Isaacs and the editor of the *Youth's Magazine* expected of her. It is only in playful and inconsequent moods that she escapes :

> To find a moral where there 's none
> Is hard indeed, yet must be done :
> *Since only morals sound and sage*
> *May grace this consecrated page :*
> Then give us leave to search a minute
> Perhaps for one that is not in it.

Her laugh is gayer and more frequent here than in the letters. In her old way she conjures these young readers into her presence, talks, jests with them, often preaches ; and yet at her most didactic, she dismisses them before they begin to flag.

There are moral tales in *Q. Q.* that recall *The Parent's Assistant* or the story of Rosamund and the Purple Jar. These suggest that Jane's liking for Miss Edgeworth's tales led her to copy the pattern ; and indeed there was a natural affinity between them, born of a " practical education " and common sanity of outlook ; but the difference was no less. Isaac Taylor had no such dominating influence upon his daughter's books as Mr. Edgeworth ; nor did Jane ever set herself, like Maria, to illustrate a System. Apart from the didactic strain and some formal descriptions of landscape, there is little to suggest her father's hand ; but now and then, like an old-fashioned drawing master, he takes her pencil to point or " finish " a sketch.

Thus, in " A Liberal Taste ", it is Mr. Taylor rather than Jane who settles the dispute between poet, painter, and philosopher, by a lecture on the division of labour. In " The Pleasures of Taste " his thoughts on wonders and beauties of Nature alternate with Jane's satire on youthful vanities. Only once (" On Intellectual Taste ")

she loses her sense of humour, accepts his literal reading of *Paradise Lost*, and cannot conceive that Eve and Adam " ever spent their evenings in playing with pebbles, dancing on the turf, or in idle conversation ". But she atones for this lapse by her own epigraph of youth : " The young are new to themselves ; and all that surrounds them is novel."

Charles Lamb, writing to Coleridge about children's books, bitterly complained that Mrs. Barbauld's " stuff " had displaced the old nursery classics, and declared that science had succeeded to poetry. This is true enough of Miss Edgeworth, for she rationalised the symbols of romance : transformed the Flying Horse of the Arabian Tales into a balloon, and made the Davy lamp her Aladdin's talisman ; but it is not true of Jane Taylor. She, like her " old retired gentleman ", could look at a garden from two points of view ; and remembering the " enchanted ground " of her childhood, understood the difference between poetry and botany.

Miss Edgeworth drew inimitable pictures to illustrate the matter of instruction ; but in Jane Taylor's lessons there is a spiritual power that gives them the semblance of romance. The little apprentice in her story, " Francis's Dream ", is directed to no material goal. His dream country is beyond the range of Whittington. This also was " enchanted ground, surpassing even the visions of youthful fancy " ; yet the reality is even more splendid : " Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither can the heart of man conceive thereof."

The same thought inspired the most arresting of her stories, " How It Strikes a Stranger ", which Browning used for his poem, " The Star of My God Rephan ". There is magic innate in the idea of a stranger from

another planet filled with wonder and delight by things that pass unnoticed here. The deeper note is struck when this thoughtlessly happy stranger is faced with the unknown fact of death. It is like the voice in *Everyman*, a solemn warning to heedless youth : " Everyman, stand still. Whither art thou going thus gaily ? " But Jane Taylor has a different answer. Her stranger understands his " real interests " and sets out with a willing foot on his lonely journey.

Other writers of children's books were indebted to *The Pilgrim's Progress* for clear and vivid pictures or a notable simplicity of style ; but none, like Jane Taylor, had the power to combine spiritual romance with an illusion of reality. For her indeed the life of the spirit was more real than bodily existence : the spaces of the sky were more productive than earth ; and if her way is narrow it runs like the Pilgrim's through a wide and varied country and gives glimpses by the way into a distance of unexpected beauty.

Her feeling for Nature, in *Q. Q.* as in the letters, is distinct from the study of " prospects " and " sublime spectacles ". Of the sun descending in a golden mist, the moon rising in her beauty, she has nothing new to say ; but writing for youth " On Intellectual Taste " she remembered her " tract of sky " and dwelt with a poet's imagination on the time " when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy ".

The frivolous Martha was not to be forgiven because she held Dr. Johnson's heretical opinion about green fields and preferred to ruminate before her glass on the pattern of a new spencer which had attracted her attention on the parade ; but even she might have been happy in Jane Taylor's garden, among " the good, gay and well-

dressed company" of flowers; and perhaps would remember her "Fable" of the envious weed that grew till it overtopped the fence, and, jealous of the flowers on the other side, twisted the chief beauty of each into a defect.

Flowers were persons to Jane Taylor. She loved them as friends and understood their individual character. It was the same with creatures. "The Worm and the Snail", "The Moth", "The Toad" might carry a double burden of moralising by the life that is in them.

That "venerable reptile", found alive among the ruins of an Egyptian temple, filled his journal with the long inertia of his *first thousand years*, slept for another hundred, and being at last awake,

> Grew pensive, discovered that life is a load;
> *Began to be weary of being a toad.*

He still lives in *Q. Q.* to point a moral for lethargic souls.

Yet these creatures are no mere personifications of human errors and virtues, nor are they human beings in disguise. They are used, like the old device of talking things, with a new sense of imaginative correspondences.

Jane Taylor's humour plays in the shadow of sadness like the humour of Charles and Mary Lamb. Her "looking glass", naturally "of a reflecting cast", is itself an image of her mind. "Incapable of misrepresentation", it gives back the moving figures with gleams of quiet amusement, records in a series of delicate pictures the imperceptible change from youth to age, the tranquil passage of lives no more eventful than her own.

The wonder is less that she could hide her bright wit under a didactic cloak than that it escaped so often to pierce the gloom of her doctrine and reconcile youth to her moralising.

LETTERS

TO HER MOTHER.

LAVENHAM, *October*, 1803.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

We are all safe and well this morning, which is a matter to me both of thankfulness and surprise. We had, indeed, a sorry journey. Upwards of twenty inside; and each woman had a young child. They were, indeed, of the lowest sort, but they were *civil* creatures. Our party appeared to excite some surprise amongst them. "I dare say they're only going on a frolic," said one: "No, no," said another, "that they aren't, by *her grieving*.' It was droll to see, when we first set off, that the whole party were in tears, for the women were soldiers' wives just parting from their husbands, not knowing whether they should ever meet again; and it was a long time before they dried their tears. But what we suffered with heat, smells, and bad language during the day, was nothing to what we suffered when night came on. The road bad—the wagon so loaded that we expected to break down, and the horses so tired, that they could scarcely get on. The drivers were frightened, and you may be sure the passengers were so. However, at half-past nine, we arrived at Mr. Langley's door; for they would not drive to ours,—and we found them waiting for us with much anxiety, and more kindness. They would not hear of our going home that

night, and had prepared beds for us. Mrs. Langley was very poorly, and had gone to bed; but we had a nice supper, and went to bed, glad indeed to get there, for I had been terribly ill the whole day * * * but we are now all well, and much refreshed by our night's rest. Our coming has excited much surprise, and some alarm. We have been this morning and have seen everything safely unpacked at our house. The little parlour with a nice fire, though unfurnished, looks very comfortable, and we are quite in good spirits. The Langleys are really too kind. They insist on our breakfasting here this morning, and Mrs. L. presses us to dine, but that we shall not do * * * * * Mrs. L. is very uneasy; all her friends live near the coast. Pray let us know how the alarm goes on. Our garden is a wild paradise. What noble willows! I am quite faint for my breakfast, therefore adieu for the present.

TO THE SAME.

COLCHESTER, *January* 19*th*, 1804.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

* * * By father's directions I will proceed to answer some of the points in your letter, which appear to us very answerable. * * * The good people at Lavenham seem to us to go a little too far in their assertions; how, for instance, can they affirm that Buonaparte never threatened us, when, besides the immense army so long collected on the coast, which we *know* was called the Army of *England*, (and what was that but a threat?)—did he not declare to Lord Whitworth, that he would settle the dispute on the banks of the

Thames ? And was not that a threat ? Besides numberless other instances in which we *cannot* have been totally misinformed. What do you mean by saying their numbers are inconsiderable ? Are there not certainly 200,000 men collected on the coast, besides large armies in other parts of France ? And it appears to us a little inconsistent that people should at one time maintain that Buonaparte never intended, or thought of invading us, and then, that if we were not so much prepared to oppose them they certainly *would* invade us ! As to the French army being in winter quarters, we have never heard it, nor do we believe it ; and, as to all danger being over for the *winter*, very strong expectations have been raised about this day month ; and Heath has very lately had fresh orders from Government to make provision in Cambridgeshire ; as they are considerably expected on the Norfolk coast, and to come round through Cambridge.

We think it looks very like a Providential interposition that the weather has been so remarkably and unusually mild. They say in Holland that their ports not being frozen is almost *unexampled*, and indeed it appears nearly as remarkable as the Waal being frozen when the French took Holland. Though at Colchester there are many unbelievers and laughers ; there are many too who still entertain strong fears. Henry Thorn, for one, firmly believes they *will* come, and advises us not to return. The Stapletons have returned, on account of their school—by no means because they think the danger is over. The King's camp equipage is come to Chelmsford, and the Bishop of Worcester's palace (at Worcester) is preparing for the Royal family to fly to.

A telegraph, which will cost 1000*l.* is now erecting at our barracks. Do all these things look as though all danger were over ? As to this being a garrison town, it is of no use at all, unless it were *fortified*, which is not the case with any town in England ; and Colchester, as a considerable town, and one so near the coast, must be more likely to attract the enemy, than an obscure out-of-the-way place like Lavenham.

TO MISS SARAH LUCK CONDER.

COLCHESTER, *February* 12*th*, 1806.

* * * In truth, Jane Taylor of the morning and Jane Taylor of the evening are as different people, in their feelings and sentiments, as two such *intimate* friends can possibly be. The former is an active handy little body, who can make beds or do plain work, and now and then takes a fancy for drawing, &c. But the last-mentioned lady never troubles her head with these menial affairs ;—nothing will suit her but the *pen ;*—and though she does nothing very extraordinary in this way, yet she so far surpasses the first-named gentlewoman, that any one who had ever received a letter from both, would immediately distinguish between the two, by the difference of the style. But to drop this ingenious allegory, I assure you it represents the truth, and I am pretty well determined not again to attempt letter-writing before breakfast. For really I am a mere machine—the most stupid and dronish creature you can imagine, at this time. The unsentimental realities of breakfast may claim some merit in restoring my mental faculties; but its effects are far surpassed by

the evening's tea: after that comfortable, social, invigorating meal, I am myself, and begin to think the world a pleasanter place, and my friends more agreeable people, and *entre nous*, myself a much more respectable personage, than they have seemed during the day; so that by eight o'clock I am just worked up to a proper state of mind for writing. If you are liable to these changing frames, you will not only excuse and feel for me, but heartily acquiesce in my resolution of now putting down the pen till *the evening*.

It is now indeed evening, and several days have elapsed since I wrote the foregoing, and I do assure you that nothing but the fear of being unable to fill another sheet in time for my father's departure, should prevail with me to send you so much nonsense. I often reproach myself for writing such trifling letters; but it is so *easy* to trifle, and so hard to write what may be worth reading, that it is a sad temptation not to attempt it. * * *

TO THE SAME.

COLCHESTER, *September 24th*, 1806.

Good morning to you, my dear L. But if you are, as I conjecture, enjoying the last grateful slumber, believe me, I intend not to disturb you; though I own it seems a little hard that I should be employed so early (for it is only half-past seven) for your amusement and instruction. And, moreover, that I may have all the praise that belongs to me, permit me to assure you that I have been up this hour or more, and have done a great deal of business; while you, perhaps, have only

been struggling with an obstinate dream, that at last has left you with all its delusions, to awake no wiser or happier than you were yesterday. If this has been your case, I heartily sympathise with you; for often has my evil genius thus tormented me; though, in truth, I have no great right to complain of him, since I must allow that in my waking dreams I have not unfrequently practised the same species of torture upon myself.

But to be serious, my dear L., I do believe that this habit of *castle-building* is very injurious to the mind. I know I have sometimes lived so much in a *castle*, as almost to forget that I lived in a *house;* and while I have been carefully arranging aërial matters *there*, have left all my solid business in disorder *here*. To be perpetually fancying what *might be*, makes us forget what we really are; and while conjuring up what we might have, we are negligent of what we really possess. You will perceive I am recollecting *youthful* follies: do not suppose, I beseech you, that I *now* indulge in these childish reveries. At *my age*, you know, I go soberly on, doing my proper business in its regular routine. Will you believe that I ever suffer my thoughts to wander from the employment of my hands? If, for example, I am making tea, I think about the tea, the tea-pot, the water, the sugar, the cream, the bread, the butter, and the plate, all in regular succession; then of the company, when it is proper to make the customary inquiries—and, think you, at any other times? In short, I am now a discreet personage, having left all the follies of sixteen far in the background.

TO A FRIEND.

(Date uncertain).

* * * My verses have certainly one advantage to boast, beyond any that ever escaped from my pen heretofore—that of being composed in my own study. Whether instigated by the sight of your retired literarium, or what, I cannot exactly tell; but certain it is, that one of my first engagements, on my return home, was to fit up an unoccupied attic, hitherto devoted only to household lumber; this I removed by the most spirited exertions, and supplied its place by all the apparatus necessary for a poet, which, you know, is not of a very extensive nature: a few book-shelves, a table for my writing-desk, one chair for myself, and another for my muse, is a pretty accurate inventory of my furniture. But though my study cannot boast the elegance of yours, it possesses one advantage which, as a poet, you ought to allow, surpasses them all—it commands a view of the country—the only room in the house, except one, which is thus favoured; and to me this is invaluable. You may now expect me to do wonders! But even if others should derive no advantages from this new arrangement, to me, I am sure, they will be numerous. For years I have been longing for such a luxury, and never before had wit enough to think of this convenient place. It will add so much to the comfort of my life, that I can do nothing but congratulate myself upon the happy thought; and I demand a large share of your poetical sympathy on the occasion. Although it is morning, and, I must tell you, but little past six, I have half filled this sheet, which capability I attribute chiefly to the sweet fields that are now smiling in vernal beauty before me.

TO MISS S. L. CONDER.

COLCHESTER, *June 2nd*, 1808.

* * * We have already had some delightful evening rambles. When we are all out together on these happy occasions, I forget all my troubles, and feel as light-hearted as I can remember I used to do some seven or eight years ago, when I scarcely knew what was meant by depression. If I should ever lose my relish for these simple pleasures—if I thought, by growing older, my feelings would no longer be alive to them, I should be ready, indeed, to cling to youth, and petition old Time to take a little rest, instead of working so indefatigably, night and day, upon me. But, alas! he is such a persevering old fellow, that nothing can hinder him: one must needs admire his industry, even though one may now and then be a little provoked with his obstinacy. But seriously, it is not right to shrink from age, much less from maturity; and could I be sure of retaining some of my present ideas, feelings, and sentiments, and of parting only with those that are vain and childish, I think I could welcome its near approach with a tolerably good grace. But I dread finding a chilling indifference steal gradually upon me for some of my pursuits and pleasures which have hitherto been most dear to me—an indifference which I think I have observed in some in the meridian of life. I am always, therefore, delighted to discover, in people of advancing years, any symptoms of their being still susceptible of such enjoyments; and in this view the letters of Mrs. Grant afforded me peculiar gratification: increasing years seem to have deprived her of no rational enjoyment. If time clipped a little

the wings of her fancy, she was still able to soar above the common pleasures of a mere housewife;—no reflection, by-the-by, upon that respectable character; believe me, I reverence it, and always regard with respect a woman who performs her difficult, complicated, and important duties with address and propriety. Yet I see no reason why the best housewife in the world should take more pleasure in making a curious pudding, than in reading a fine poem; or feel a greater pride in setting out an elegant table, than in producing a well-trained child. I perfectly glory in the undeniable example Mrs. Grant exhibits of a woman filling up all the duties of her domestic station with peculiar activity and success, and at the same time cultivating the minds of her children usefully and elegantly; and still allowing herself to indulge occasionally in the most truly rational of all pleasures—the pleasures of intellect.

I daresay you read a paper in the *Christian Observer* for April, on Female Cultivation. I feel grateful to the sensible and liberally-minded author. I do believe the reason why so few men, even among the intelligent, wish to encourage the mental cultivation of women, is their excessive love of the *good things* of this life; they tremble for their dear stomachs, concluding that a woman who could taste the pleasures of poetry or sentiment, would never descend to pay due attention to those exquisite flavours in pudding or pie, that are so gratifying to their philosophic palates; and yet, poor gentlemen, it is a thousand pities they should be so much mistaken; for after all, who so much as a woman of sense and cultivation, will feel the real importance of domestic duties; or who will so well, so cheerfully, perform them? * * *

TO MR. JOSIAH CONDER.

COLCHESTER, *February* 21*st*, 1809.

* * * Mr. James Montgomery is the principal subject of your last letter. I have felt quite impatient to add my thanks to those Ann has, I believe, already presented, for your truly friendly exertions to introduce us to his notice; for as your interviews were few, and occupied by much more interesting discourse, to remember two obscure country rhymers was very kind; and so we feel it. As to his remarks on our books, they cannot be otherwise than gratifying. We feel all the difference between such an opinion, expressed by a man of taste and genius, and the customary compliment of "Sweet pretty things, ladies—they do you great credit," &c. I regret he did not leave room to find fault. We are fully conscious that we deserve it. When we first wrote, we were not in the habit of taking pains; that is to say, we were not aware what pains were necessary; neither did we know what we had at stake; consequently our earliest productions abound with inaccuracies. Parents are pleased with them, because their children are; but from Mr. Montgomery, who is neither a little boy nor a father, I had not expected so favourable a critique. But since it would ill become me to question his judgment or taste, the small portion of his praise which I take to my own share affords me solid satisfaction.

Alas! if a poor wight has ever had the misfortune to hit upon two words that jingle, what a craving appetite is created; and he is, perhaps, doomed to endure perpetual starvation, or at best to derive a scanty and precarious subsistence from crumbs of praise: though it is

as delicious to his palate (and even more so from its rarity) as to that of the favoured bard who receives it as his daily bread. But while I must confess that I have felt the appetite, I can say with sincerity that my happiness does not depend upon dainties of this sort, and that I can live contentedly upon plainer food. I wish to be thankful that I can find enjoyment in simple pleasures, and such as are, so far as I can discover, purified from the dross of selfishness and vanity. I am pleased to look within, and find that I am really happy when our complete family circle is formed, and useful and interesting conversation arises and circulates. Memory can recall many livelier scenes, and fancy could present others still gayer, but neither memory nor fancy can persuade me to be discontented with the present. The loss of every external source of happiness, by the death of our early friends here, forced us to seek it in its native soil. I loved home, but I knew not how to value and enjoy it; and to the beauties of nature, though blooming around me, I was blind. I am surprised when, looking back only a few years, I remember how totally insensible I was to those scenes which are now constant sources of delight; though I should have been not a little startled had my taste and feeling been questioned—I, who have spent many a summer's evening on the old ivy-grown town wall, reading Thomson to the friend of my bosom; and would strain my eyes till they ached, that I might read by moonlight! But now, though I confess I prefer the convenience of a commodious apartment, and willingly endure the gross vapours of tallow, and the barbarism of artificial light; yet, I flatter myself, I know better how to enjoy the glowing landscape, as well as to taste

the beauties of the poet; and that I contemplate the fair face of the moon with sensations not only more rational, but more pleasurable, than in those days of idle romance. That I have an eye to see, and a heart to feel, the beauties of nature, I acknowledge with gratitude, because they afford me constant and unsatiating pleasure, and form almost my only recreation. And I indulge the hope that, having acquired a love for these simple enjoyments, I shall never lose it; but that in seasons of solitude or of sorrow, I shall continue to find a sweet solace in them. When I am low in spirits, weary, or cross—or especially when worried by some of the teasing realities of life, one glance at the landscape from the window of my attic never fails to produce a salutary effect upon me. And when "'tis night, and the landscape is lovely no more,"—if moon, planet, or star, condescends to beam through my casement, I revive under its benign influence. Many might smile at this, especially as I have renounced the title of romantic, and claim that of rational, for my pleasures; but I beg you will not. As a Londoner, I might apologize for dwelling on such a theme; but to a poet I cannot; and though to a correspondent I ought to apologize for so much egotism, to a friend I need not.

The infant smiles of spring have, perhaps, inspired me with this effusion: its return is always reviving and cheering; and while all around is gay and young, we forget that *our* winter has approached a step nearer. I am sometimes startled when I recollect that very probably half my allotted days are already spent; and possibly much more. Years that once appeared such long and tedious periods, now seem to fly onward with

such rapidity, that they are gone ere they can be enjoyed or improved. Yet a few, at most, of these fleeting seasons, and I, and all I love, shall be forgotten on earth. You have heard, doubtless, that we have lost our friend Mrs. Stapleton. Thus, we see a family nearly extinct, in which, but a few years ago, was centred all that was interesting and dear to us. We have no juvenile recollections with which they are not connected; and the much valued friendships we have formed in later years have not effaced those early impressions. It is difficult to realize such losses. And it is not these alone: for of a gay and happy circle, with whom we were intimately connected, Ann and I are the only survivors. * * *

TO HER BROTHERS ISAAC AND MARTIN.

Oh this cruel separation! It would have killed me to have known when first we parted, how complete it would be. I am glad we deceived ourselves with the hope of keeping up frequent intercourse by letters and visits; it saved us a severer pang than any we then endured. These painful reflections are revived by the disappointment of our fond hopes of a speedy reunion, which is now rendered not only distant, but very doubtful. You, engaged in business, and surrounded by friends, cannot feel as we do on this subject. We have nothing to do but to contemplate our cheerless prospects, or to think of the days that are past. I do not mean it reproachfully when I say, that you will soon learn to do without us; it is the natural consequence of your situation, and we ought to be reconciled to the 'common lot.' But how can I forget the happy years in which we

were everything to each other? I am sometimes half jealous of our friends, especially of ———, who now has that confidence which we once enjoyed. But I will not proceed in this mournful strain: and do not think, my dear brothers, that I am charging you with neglect, or any decrease of affection; though I do sometimes anticipate, and that with a bitter regret, the natural effect of a long-continued separation. * * *

We have not yet tried separation long enough to know what its effects will eventually be. I dread lest, in time, we should become so accustomed to it, as to feel contented to live apart, and forget the pleasure of our former intercourse; and I cannot suffer myself to believe what, after all, is most probable, that we shall never be united again. It is a forlorn idea; for what will two or three flying visits in the course of the year amount to? Life is short, and we perhaps half-way through it already. Well, I ought to be thankful that we have passed so large a portion of it in company, and that the best part, too; and, as to the future, if I could be sure that years of separation would not in the least estrange our affections from each other, and that the glow which warms the youthful breast would never be chilled by our passage through a cold, heartless world, I would be content. But the idea of becoming such brothers and sisters as we see everywhere, is incomparably more painful than that of a final banishment, in which we should love each other as we now do.

* * * We still indulge the hope of renewed intercourse; this hope may indeed be fallacious, but I cannot reject it. In the meantime, we do, and we will, con-

tinue to love each other ; and this *is* consolation. Long before the dear circle was broken up, I looked forward to the time of separation with dread ; chiefly from the apprehension lest that loveliest of plants, family affection, (which in spite of many storms, had been successfully reared and tenderly cherished among us) should droop, and in time wither, when the distracting cares of life should call off our attention from it. For my own part, I have scarcely yet made the trial ; for, although the separation has taken place, yet, as my situation remains the same, I have found no difficulty in retaining and cultivating that affection which flourished when we were companions ; and I am willing to believe that the scenes you have passed through since you left your home, have rather increased than lessened your attachment to it. It must be delightful, cheering, soothing, to turn from the chilling selfishness of those with whom you must often have to do, to the affection of your family and friends ; to know that there are those who do, and who always will love you—whose happiness, in a great measure, depends upon yours, and who consider your interests to be the same as their own.

From experience I know how baleful it is to the disposition to be placed in circumstances in which the malevolent passions are liable to be roused, and in which we have to be concerned with those whom it is not only impossible to love, but whom it seems a sort of virtue to dislike. There is the same difference between love and hatred, as between happiness and misery ; and there is more real enjoyment in the pains of the former, than in the qualifications of the latter. I envy those who can look with an eye of benevolent compassion

upon the lowest instances of human depravity; who, discerning in their own hearts the seeds of the same hateful dispositions, feel more gratitude for the providential restraints to which they must attribute the difference, than anger towards those who have wanted these advantages.

TO HER MOTHER.

My dear Mother,

A parcel has at length arrived, and I sit down immediately, according to promise, to communicate its principal contents, though I tell you beforehand, that you may not be disappointed, there is no particular news on the subject which most interests us.

I shall now proceed to make extracts from the letters we have received. The parcel contained the sheet of hymns; and letters from Josiah, Isaac, Martin, Luck, Susette, Emma, Sarah Hinton, Professor Smyth of Cambridge, Walter Scott, and James Montgomery.

Walter Scott says:—

"Mr. Walter Scott requests permission to intrude upon the 'Associate Minstrels' his grateful thanks for the pleasure he has received in perusing their beautiful poetry, and for the honour they have done him in the MS. verses. They have greatly overrated Mr. Scott's situation in life, which is not beyond a decent independence, and he might with still better grounds disclaim some of the compliments to his poetry, were he not too much flattered by the exaggeration, considering the quarters from which it comes. Should the 'Associate Minstrels' be at any time disposed to drop the Incognito,

Mr. Walter Scott would be happy to claim the honour of being made personally known to them, and meanwhile begs to assure them of his high respect for their poetical talents, and for the amiable qualities which their mode of employing them sufficiently indicates.

" EDINBURGH, *May 12th.*"

Thus far Walter Scott: now for our dear MONTGOMERY:—

" I believe I ought to acknowledge the honour which the ' Associate Minstrels ' have done me by their graceful dedication in a gratulatory ode recounting their merits, and foretelling their future glories; but I am so entirely unaccustomed to write complimentary verses that I must in plain prose and in plain truth tell them, through you, that I sincerely and fervently thank them for the most pleasing and elegant token of unexpected and unbribed approbation, which I have yet received in public for the labours of my muse. Thank them therefore individually, and thank them collectively; their kindness is not the less estimable, because, except yourself, they are all unknown.

" In the volume of the ' Associate Minstrels ' your ' Silence ' is the promise of something so much greater than itself, that you must beware not to disappoint the expectation of your friends—shall I say of the world? You ought now never to write on mean or insipid subjects. I speak more confidently of your talents to your face, because I spoke highly—romantically of them before I saw your face, or knew your name, &c. Of your companions I have only space to say little, and I am glad, because it will compel me to speak out, and to

speak warmly. A. is in my mind the queen of the assembly. She is a poet of a high order; the first unquestionably among those who write for children, and not the last by hundreds of those who write for men. The 'Maniac's Song' has not only the melancholy madness, but the inspiration of poetry; also the simile, page 97, is wonderfully fine and perfectly original. The two stanzas that contain it are as lovely as the stars they celebrate. J. (Jane) is very delicate and sprightly, there is a tender playfulness in her best manner that is truly fascinating. E. has a splendid imagination, and excels in description; her colouring is like that of nature, glowing and harmonious; but she must travel a little wider, and vary her scenery more, lest we should lose the benefit of those of her powers which she has not yet discovered in herself, for lack of an opportunity of exercising them. The lyre of S. does not disgrace the concert of the 'Associate Minstrels.' I hope J.'s reply will induce C. senior to take his harp from the willows, and tune it to the songs of Zion."

Thus far James Montgomery. And now, dear Mother, you have had the best of the juice. I have written in a wild hurry. We have no fresh news of any sort, indeed this might content you. Your affectionate, JANE.

TO MR. J. CONDER.

COLCHESTER, *August 20th*, 1811.

Having a leisure evening—the last, probably, before our removal, I devote it to fulfilling my promise to write to you once more from Colchester. Yes, we are really going, and in a few days the place that so long has

known us shall know us no more. Before I quit this scene of the varied interests of my childhood and youth, I ought to give my mind a long leave of absence, and send it back leisurely to revisit the past—to " recall the years in exile driven, and break their long captivity ; " but in the hurry of the moment the feeling of it is lost ; and even if I could afford to send my thoughts on this retrograde excursion, and " up the stream of time could turn my sail, to view the fairy haunts of long-lost hours," I ought not to ask you to accompany them, for they would stay to contemplate scenes and gaze on faces unknown and uninteresting to you. I can invite my friends to sympathise in my present interests, and to survey with me my future prospects ; but of *that* fairy land they could only discern a line of blue distance ; while to me, " Here a cot, and there a spire, still glitter in the sun." But a melancholy and sentimental retrospection is an unprofitable indulgence—a kind of luxury which, perhaps, I have no right to allow to myself. Let me rather, if I have time for contemplation, take a more humbling and painful survey ; and, reviewing the sins and follies of childhood and youth, resolutely say, " The time past of my life shall suffice to have wrought them." But I want energy to commence a new career. Whether my mind will recover vigour under new circumstances, or will faint under the exertion I have in prospect, remains to be seen : it is a fearful experiment.

Here I sit in my little room : it looks just as it always did ; but in a few days all will be changed : and this consecrated attic will be occupied (how shall I tell it you !) by an *exciseman ;* for his wife observed to me, when surveying the house—" Ah, this room will do nicely

for my husband to keep his books in ; "—well, I shall take with me all that has rendered it most interesting ; and, as to the moonshine and the sunbeams that will continue to irradiate its walls, I would not withhold them from that son of traffic, although they will never kindle a spark of poetry in his eye.

* * * My good friend, be not too confident in your scholarship : you may be master of all the learned languages, and yet a very dunce when you endeavour to decipher the hieroglyphics inscribed on a female heart. If you have a taste for puzzling studies, there are the Babylonish bricks for you, which have hitherto defied so much erudition :—but there would be a chance of success in attempting to decipher *them*. * * * * If I were qualified to offer the most judicious counsel on subjects where, in fact, I can but reason from distant analogies, I should still doubt whether, recalling the attention to a too interesting object, might not be productive of, at least, a counterbalancing evil. But indeed it is not my part to admonish you : were I to attempt it, I could adopt no better plan than that of making large quotations from your own letters, and then exhorting you to " mind what the gentleman says."

TO THE SAME.

Ilfracombe, *November* 14*th*, 1812.

* * * Though you may consider this as a tardy performance of my promise, it is, I assure you, but the second letter I have dated from hence. I perceive that it is all in vain to run to the remotest corner of the earth for retirement and leisure ; at least, it is in vain to seek

for them amid the rocks of Ilfracombe. * * * I wish I could introduce you for a moment (or as much longer as you could stay) to our comfortable fireside, around which we often talk of those we have left, till we forget the distance which separates us. * * * I promise not to detain you long with descriptions of the scenery around us, to which it would probably be more toil than pleasure to listen. For in such cases, where the imagination of the writer can fly, that of the reader must climb; and perhaps she is wholly indisposed to the exertion. Besides that, it is not the most agreeable thing to be told that "you can form no idea—you can't imagine—you never saw anything like it," &c. So then, to do the thing more politely, I must tell you that *I* had formed no idea of the kind of scenery with which we are surrounded; and that I had never before seen anything like it, was evident from the effect it at first produced upon me.

Ilfracombe is situated in a deep valley, surrounded on one side by barren hills, and on the other by stupendous rocks which skirt the sea. Our lodgings very pleasantly overlook the harbour, which affords us constant entertainment. The sea is close behind the house, and is so near a neighbour, that, during the last high tides, the waves rose in immense sheets of foam, and fell over a high wall opposite our chamber windows: it also flowed into the house in front, and kept us close prisoners. Our walks in every direction are so interesting, that, while the weather permitted, we spent a great part of the day abroad. Our rambles among the rocks I enjoy most; though at first they excited sensations of awe and terror, rather than of pleasure. But now we climb without fear amid a wilderness of

rocks, where nothing else can be seen, and nothing heard, but the roar of the distant sea; here the only path is over the huge fragments which lie scattered in all directions, and which it requires some courage as well as dexterity to scale. Besides these, we have several cheerful walks, commanding the sea, bounded to the north by a beautiful line of Welsh mountains. Their aspects are very various; at times appearing only like faint clouds in the horizon; but when the weather is clear, and the sun shines upon them, they exhibit an exquisite variety of light and shade, and delicate colouring, finished by distance, like the finest miniature. From some of the highest hills we have distinctly perceived the buildings on the nearer part of the coast;—to the west the wide ocean is before us,—

> "Now sparkling with sunbeams, now dimpled with oars,
> Now dark with the fresh-blowing gale."

The rocky cliffs of Lundy Island add beauty and interest to the scene. * * *

TO HER FATHER AND MOTHER.

Spring, 1813.

We had travelled several miles over a high, wild, and dreary tract of country; giving the idea of travelling over the world as a planet, and rendered still more desolate in appearance by torrents of rain. We were obliged to continue in the carriage, ascending hills, where travellers almost always alight to relieve the horses, and were even constrained to do the same in passing a frightful precipice, where there is neither fence nor hedge, and where a chaise very lately fell over. At

this point, a fine mountain scene opened upon us; and a sudden turn of the road discovered the enchanting vale and village of Linmouth, close to the sea, and at the base of rocks of tremendous height, and most exquisitely diversified in their colouring. After a long and steep ascent, we reached the Inn, where, fortunately, the room we occupy overlooks a considerable part of this fine prospect. This Inn stands near the edge of the precipice that overhangs the sea, and seems to be in the clouds. To-morrow morning we are to meet a chaise from Minehead, at the top of the opposite hill—the ascent being so steep that chaises rarely come across the valley. * * *

On Thursday morning, finding my cold surprisingly better, and the weather being finer, I resolved at least to see the Valley of Rocks: so, at half-past five, we set off at full speed, and I was gratified with a hasty sight of it. The place gives the idea of gigantic architectural ruins; and the impression left upon my mind by the novelty and silent solemnity of this magnificent scene, will not soon be effaced. We returned to breakfast at the Inn, and directly afterwards set off to climb the opposite hill, attended by a horse with panniers, carrying our baggage. This walk afforded us an opportunity of seeing something of the beauties of the vale of Linmouth, which I will not attempt to describe.

TO ANN ON HER MARRIAGE.

ILFRACOMBE, *December* 18*th*, 1813.

MY DEAR ANN,

I cannot suffer this interesting morning to pass without something of a salutation from Ilfracombe; and I dare say this letter will arrive in good company; but I am sure no one will address you who can feel on this occasion either so glad or so sorry as I do. So far as you only are concerned, I think I am entirely glad, and feel as perfectly satisfied and happy as one can do about untried circumstances. But I cannot forget that this morning, which forms one indissoluble partnership, dissolves another, which we had almost considered so. From the early days of "Moll and Bett," down to these last times, we have been more inseparable companions than sisters usually are, and our pursuits and interests have been the same. My thoughts of late have often wandered back to those distant years, and passed over the varied scenes which chequered our childhood and youth:—there is scarcely a recollection, in all that long period, in which we are not mutually concerned, and equally interested. If this separation had taken place ten years ago, we might, by this time, have been in some degree estranged from each other; but having passed so large and important a portion of life in such intimate union, I think we may confidently say it never will be so. For brothers and sisters to separate is the common lot;—for their affection and interest to remain unabated is not common, but I am sure it is possible, and I think the experience we have already had, proves that we may expect its continuance. Farewell, my dear Ann!

and in this emphatical farewell, I would comprehend all the wishes, the prayers, the love, the joy, and the sorrow, which it would be so difficult to express in mere words. If there is a dash of bitterness in the grief with which I bid you farewell, it is only from the recollection that I have not been to you the sister that I might have been. My feelings have been so strongly excited to-day, that I cannot bear more of it; and I must leave you to imagine what more I would say on this occasion.

I cannot—no, I cannot realize the busy scene at the Castle House, nor fancy you in your bridal appearance. I intend to place myself before the view of the house, about the time I imagine you will be walking down the gravel-walk, and stand there while you are at church, and till I think you are coming back again. How strange—how sad, that I cannot be with you! What a world is this, that its brightest pleasures are, almost invariably, attended with the keenest heart-rendings.

TO HER FATHER AND MOTHER.

MARAZION, *November 25th*, 1814.

MY DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER,

We removed to our lodgings the last week in October. Mrs. Thomas exerted herself much, to prevent our feeling the change. Several new things were bought, and everything made as comfortable as possible. We have quite won Ann's heart [the servant], so she is delighted to come and bring us a pat of her butter, or one of her Cornish cakes. * * * It will, as it is, be quite as much as I shall do, to get out my book by the spring. Sometimes I write pretty fast, but often sit whole

mornings without a word. I reckon that I have done just half of it. * * * We had a most interesting sight just before we left the Grenfells', which I venture to say you will never have at Ongar,—an *Indiaman* wrecked upon the rocks almost under our windows. I woke early one morning with the violence of the storm, and going to the windows to look at the sea, beheld the torn sails streaming in the wind over the tops of the houses. We hastened down to the shore, and there was indeed a scene! The rocks and sands lined with hundreds of people, or *wreckers*, as they are called, ready to seize all that floated on shore; the boats going out at the hazard of the lives of the men, to save the passengers, who narrowly escaped. It was a rich cargo, and the sands have been covered with coffee ever since. * * * One trick of trade, which I have found very useful myself, I daresay you are up to—that is, in discussing any fault in a character, to have the *real* fault of a real character in my eye; which prevents the advice from being too general, and is more likely to make it come home to the conscience and feelings. This, I think, I can do without *uncharitableness;* it is only studying Nature, and without it I could do *nothing*. If you are at a loss for a character, take *mine*, and you will find faults enough to last out the whole volume. I assure you that I take greater liberties with *myself*, in that way, than with any of my friends or neighbours; and have really found so far, the beam in my own eye makes me see more clearly to take the mote out of others'. The moment that I leave off looking at some original, I find I am writing what is tame and unnatural, or *general* and unimpressive. Pray do not think I am *dictating*, or

that it is in consequence of dissatisfaction with your writings; it is only because it struck me, and I should be thankful for any hints in return.

Yours affectionately,

JANE.

TO MR. JOSIAH CONDER.

(A birthday retrospect.)

MARAZION, *September 23rd*, 1814.

Months have passed since I wrote to you; and in the interval I have travelled a hundred miles further west, and seen many new places and faces: but this I can say (and I hope you will think it worth sending three hundred miles to tell you) that association with strangers, so far from alienating my thoughts and affections from those I have long known and valued, attaches me still more to them. I am surrounded by those who know that I am—Miss Taylor; but know not that I am—"Jane;" and it sometimes makes me sigh for a renewal of intercourse with those who, for that simple reason, have yielded me an unmerited share of their regard. The many follies, infirmities, and deficiencies which are intimately known to them, may, it is true, be partially and for a time concealed from strangers: but yet, I would rather be with those who "with all my faults, have loved me still." * * *

Nothing can be more tranquil and agreeable than the manner in which our time passes here; we are both sufficiently occupied to preserve us from dulness; nor do we need other relaxation than the pleasure of conversing with each other in those hours of the day which we spend together. We have, however, some society

here—more indeed than at Ilfracombe. I would gladly avoid the trouble of it; but I know it is good for me to be obliged to exert myself in conversation sometimes. * * *

I do not think my attachment to Nonconformity is likely to be at all shaken by my present circumstances;—on the contrary, I long to attend "among my own people," and to worship in the simplicity of the Gospel. Yet it is both pleasant and useful to associate with good people who differ from ourselves.

It is not from intention, but accident, that I am writing to you on this day of the month. You remember, I dare say, the advanced stage at which I am arrived:—at five and twenty I regretted the departure of youth: but now I am quite reconciled to being as old as I am. In looking back upon the past, nothing strikes me so forcibly, for future benefit, as the different sensations occasioned by a review of its *misfortunes*, and its *faults*. Upon seasons of care, anxiety, and distress, of which (though they have been comparatively few and light) I can remember some, I can reflect without a feeling of regret and uneasiness; indeed, there is a kind of satisfaction and complacency in looking back upon scenes of suffering: while the mistakes, follies, and sins, that have marked my life, are sources of present and perpetual uneasiness. Of this, past experience and present feeling tend increasingly to convince me, that whatever afflictions may be appointed for me in future, if, in the course of the next ten or twenty years (should I see so many) I shall attain more holiness, I shall also enjoy more happiness than in the years that are past. To do quietly the duties of to-day, without ambition, and

without anxiety, is to ensure comfort ;—and comfort is a word that suits better the present state than happiness ; and in truth it is all that would be desired by us if our thoughts were familiar with death and eternity ;—if we habitually remembered that the time is short—that all we are most interested about is passing away, and that the flower we love best fadeth. * * *

ORIGINAL POEMS AND RHYMES FOR THE NURSERY

MORNING.

Awake, little girl, it is time to arise,
  Come shake drowsy sleep from your eye ;
The lark is loud warbling his notes in the skies,
  And the sun is far mounted on high.

O come, for the fields with gay flow'rets o'erflow,
  The dew-drop is trembling still,
The lowing herds graze in the pastures below,
  And the sheep-bell is heard from the hill.

O come, for the bee has flown out of his bed,
  To begin his day's labours anew ;
The spider is weaving her delicate thread,
  Which brilliantly glitters with dew.

O come, for the ant has crept out of her cell,
  Her daily employment to seek :
She knows the true value of moments too well
  To waste them in indolent sleep.

Awake, little sleeper, and do not despise
  Of insects instruction to ask,
From your pillow with good resolution arise,
  And cheerfully go to your task.

EVENING.

Little girl, it is time to retire to your rest,
The sheep are put into the fold,
The linnet forsakes us and flies to her nest,
To shelter her young from the cold.

The owl has flown out from his lonely retreat,
And screams thro' the tall shady trees ;
The nightingale takes on the hawthorn his seat,
And sings to the evening breeze.

The sun, too, now seems to have finish'd his race,
And sinks once again to his rest ;
But tho' we no longer can see his bright face,
" He leaves a gold streak in the west."

Little girl, have you finish'd your daily employ
With industry, patience, and care ?
If so, lay your head on your pillow with joy,
No thorn to disturb shall be there.

The moon thro' your curtains shall cheerfully peep,
Her silver beam dance on your eyes ;
And mild ev'ning breezes shall fan you to sleep,
Till bright morning bids you arise.

THE APPLE TREE.

Old John had an apple tree, healthy and green,
Which bore the best codlins that ever were seen,
So juicy, so mellow and red ;
And when they were ripe, as old Johnny was poor,
He sold them to children that pass'd by his door,
To buy him a morsel of bread.

Little Dick, his next neighbour, one often might see,
With longing eye viewing this nice apple tree,
And wishing a codlin would fall;
One day, as he stood in the heat of the sun,
He began thinking whether he might not take one,
And then he look'd over the wall.

And as he again cast his eye on the tree,
He said to himself, "O, how nice they would be;
So cool and refreshing to-day!
The tree is so full, and I'd only take one,
And old John won't see, for he is not at home,
And nobody is in the way."

But stop, little boy, take your hand from the bough,
Remember, tho' old John can't see you just now,
And no one to chide you is nigh,
There is One who by night, just as well as by day,
Can see all you do, and can hear all you say,
From his glorious throne in the sky.

Oh then, little boy, come away from the tree,
Content, hot or weary, or thirsty to be,
Or any thing rather than steal;
For the Great God, who even thro' darkness can look,
Writes down ev'ry crime we commit in his book,
However we think to conceal.

THE DISAPPOINTMENT.

In tears to her mother poor Harriet came,
Let us listen to hear what she says:
"Oh see, dear mamma, it is pouring with rain,
We cannot go out in the chaise.

" All the week have I long'd for the journey, you know,
And fancy'd the minutes were hours,
And now that I'm dress'd, and all ready to go,
O see, dear mamma, how it pours."

" I'm sorry, my dear," her good mother reply'd,
" The rain won't permit us to go,
And I'm sorry to see, for the sake of a ride,
That you cry, and distress yourself so.

" These slight disappointments and crosses you hate,
Are sent you your mind to prepare,
That you may with courage and fortitude wait
More serious distresses to bear.

" Oh think not, my child, as you grow up in life,
That pleasures unceasing will flow ;
Disappointment, and trouble, and sorrow, and strife,
Will follow wherever you go.

" Tho' now the bright prospect seems opening fair,
And hope paints a scene of delight,
Too soon will you see it all vanish in air,
And leave you to darkness and night.

" Ah then, my dear girl, when those sorrows appear,
And troubles flow in like a tide,
You'll wonder that ever you wasted a tear
On merely the loss of a ride.

" But tho' this world's pleasures are fading and vain,
Religion is lasting and true ;
Real pleasure and joy in her paths you may gain,
Nor will disappointment ensue."

THE ROBIN.

Away, pretty Robin, fly home to your nest,
To make you my captive I still should like best,
And feed you with worms and with bread ;
Your eyes are so sparkling, your feathers so soft,
Your little wings flutter so pretty aloft,
And your breast is all colour'd with red.

But then 'twould be cruel to keep you, I know,
So stretch out your wings, little Robin, and go,
Fly home to your young ones again ;
Go listen again to the notes of your mate,
And enjoy the green shade in your lonely retreat,
Secure from the wind and the rain.

But when the leaves fall, and the winter winds blow,
And the green fields are cover'd all over with snow,
And the clouds in white feathers descend ;
When the springs are all ice, and the rivulets freeze,
And the long shining icicles drop from the trees,
Then, Robin, remember your friend.

Ere with cold and with hunger quite perish'd and weak,
Come tap at my window again with your beak,
And gladly I'll let you come in ;
You shall fly to my bosom, or perch on my thumbs,
Or hop round the table and pick up the crumbs,
And never be hungry again.

THE GLEANER.

Before the bright sun rises over the hill,
In the corn-field poor Mary is seen,
Impatient her little blue apron to fill,
With the few scatter'd ears she can glean.

She never leaves off, or runs out of her place,
To play, or to idle and chat;
Except now and then, just to wipe her hot face,
And fan herself with her broad hat.

"Poor girl, hard at work in the heat of the sun,
How tired and hot you must be;
Why don't you leave off, as the others have done,
And sit with them under the tree?"

"Oh no! for my mother lies ill in her bed,
Too feeble to spin or to knit;
And my poor little brothers are crying for bread,
And yet we can't give them a bit!

"Then could I be merry, and idle, and play,
While they are so hungry and ill?
O no, I had rather work hard all the day,
My little blue apron to fill."

SNOW.

O come to the window, dear brother, and see
What mischief was done in the night;
The snow has quite cover'd the nice apple trees,
And the bushes are sprinkled with white.

The spring in the grove is beginning to freeze,
The pond is hard frozen all o'er;
Long icicles hang in bright rows from the trees,
And drop in odd shapes from the door.

The old mossy thatch, and the meadow so green,
Are cover'd all over with white;
The snow-drop and crocus no more can be seen,
The thick snow has cover'd them quite.

And see the poor birds how they fly to and fro,
They're come for their breakfast again;
But the little worms all are hid under the snow,
They hop about chirping in vain.

Then open the window, I'll throw them some bread,
I've some of my breakfast to spare;
I wish they would come to my hand to be fed,
But they're all flown away, I declare.

Nay now, pretty birds, don't be frighten'd, I pray,
You shall not be hurt, I'll engage;
I'm not come to catch you, and force you away,
And fasten you up in a cage.

I wish you could know you've no cause for alarm,
From me you have nothing to fear;
Why, my little fingers should do you no harm,
Altho' you came ever so near.

THE PIGS.

" Do look at those pigs as they lie in the straw,"
Said Dick to his father, one day ;
" They keep eating longer than ever I saw,
What nasty fat gluttons are they."

" I see they are feasting," his father reply'd,
" They eat a great deal I allow ;
But let us remember, before we deride,
'Tis the nature, my dear, of a sow.

" But when a great boy, such as you, my dear Dick,
Does nothing but eat all the day,
And keeps sucking good things till he makes himself sick,
What a glutton ! indeed, we may say.

" When plumcake and sugar for ever he picks,
And sweetmeats, and comfits, and figs ;
Pray let him get rid of his own nasty tricks,
And then he may laugh at the pigs."

FINERY.

In a frock richly trimm'd with a beautiful lace,
And hair nicely dress'd, hanging over her face,
Thus deck'd Harriot went to the house of a friend,
With a large little party the ev'ning to spend.

" Ah ! how they will all be delighted, I guess,
And stare with surprise at my elegant dress ; "
Thus said the vain girl, and her little heart beat,
Impatient the happy young party to meet.

But alas! they were all too intent on their play,
To observe the fine clothes of this lady so gay;
And thus all her trouble quite lost its design,
For they saw she was proud, but forgot she was fine.

'Twas Lucy, tho' only in simple white clad,
(Nor trimmings, nor laces, nor jewels she had,)
Whose cheerful good nature delighted them more,
Than all the fine garments that Harriot wore.

'Tis better to have a sweet smile on one's face,
Than to wear a rich frock with an elegant lace,
For the good-natur'd girl is lov'd best in the main,
If her dress is but decent, tho' ever so plain.

THE POND.

There was a round pond, and a pretty pond too,
About it white daises and butterflow'rs grew:
And dark weeping willows that stoop to the ground,
Dipp'd in their long branches and shaded it round.

A party of ducks to this pond would repair,
To feast on the green water-weeds that grew there:
Indeed, the assembly would frequently meet
To talk over affairs in this pleasant retreat.

Now the subjects on which they were wont to converse,
I'm sorry I cannot include in my verse;
For tho' I've oft listen'd, in hopes of discerning,
I own 'tis a matter that baffles my learning.

One day a young chicken, that liv'd thereabout,
Stood watching to see the ducks pass in and out;
Now standing tail upwards, now diving below;
She thought, of all things, she should like to do so.

So, this foolish chicken began to declare,
" I've really a great mind to venture in there ;
My mother oft tells me I must not go nigh,
But then, for my part, I can never tell why.

" Ducks have wings and feathers, and so have I too,
And my feet, what's the reason that they will not do ?
Tho' *my* beak is pointed, and *their* beaks are round,
Is that any reason that I should be drown'd ?

" So, why should not I swim as well as a duck ?
Suppose that I venture, and e'en try my luck ?
For," said she, (spite of all that her mother had taught her,)
" I am so remarkably fond of the water."

So, in this poor ignorant animal flew,
But soon found her dear mother's cautions were true ;
She splash'd, and she dash'd, and she turn'd herself round,
And heartily wish'd herself safe on the ground.

But now 'twas too late to begin to repent,
The harder she struggled, the deeper she went ;
And when ev'ry effort she vainly had tried,
She slowly sunk down to the bottom, and died !

The ducks, I perceiv'd, began loudly to quack,
When they saw the poor fowl floating dead on his back,
And by their grave gestures and looks 'twas apparent,
They discours'd on the sin of not minding a parent.

GREEDY RICHARD.

"I THINK I want some pies this morning,"
Said Dick, stretching himself and yawning;
So down he threw his slate and books,
And saunter'd to the pastry-cook's.

And there he cast his greedy eyes
Round on the jellies and the pies,
So to select, with anxious care,
The very nicest that was there.

At last the point was thus decided,
As his opinion was divided
'Twixt pie and jelly, he was loath
Either to leave, so took them both.

Now Richard never could be pleas'd
To stop when hunger was appeas'd,
But would go on to eat and stuff,
Long after he had had enough.

"I shan't take any more," said Dick:
"Dear me, I feel extremely sick:
I cannot eat this other bit;
I wish I had not tasted it."

Then slowly rising from his seat,
He threw the cheesecake in the street,
And left the tempting pastry-cook's,
With very discontented looks.

Just then a man with wooden leg
Met Dick, and held his hat to beg;
And while he told his mournful case,
Look'd at him with imploring face.

Dick, wishing to relieve his pain,
His pockets search'd, but search'd in vain,
And so at last he did declare,
He had not got a farthing there.

The beggar turn'd with face of grief,
And look of patient unbelief,
While Richard, now completely tam'd,
Felt inconceivably asham'd.

" I wish," said he (but wishing's vain)
" I had my money back again,
And had not spent my last, to pay
For what I only threw away.

" Another time I'll take advice,
And not buy things because they're nice ;
But rather save my little store,
To give poor folks, who want it more.'

DIRTY JIM.

THERE was one little Jim,
'Tis reported of him,
And must be, to his lasting disgrace,
That he never was seen
With his hands at all clean,
Nor yet ever clean was his face.

His friends were much hurt
To see so much dirt,
And often they made him quite clean ;
But all was in vain,
He was dirty again,
And not at all fit to be seen.

When to wash he was sent,
He reluctantly went,
With water to splash himself o'er.
But he seldom was seen
To have wash'd himself clean,
And often look'd worse than before.

The idle and bad,
Like this little lad,
May be dirty and black, to be sure;
But good boys are seen,
To be decent and clean,
Altho' they are ever so poor.

THE COW AND THE ASS.

Beside a green meadow a stream us'd to flow,
So clear, one might see the white pebbles below;
To this cooling brook the warm cattle would stray,
To stand in the shade on a hot summer's day.

A cow, quite oppress'd with the heat of the sun,
Came here to refresh, as she often had done;
And standing quite still, leaning over the stream,
Was musing, perhaps; or perhaps she might dream.

But soon a brown ass, of respectable look,
Came trotting up also, to taste of the brook,
And to nibble a few of the daisies and grass:
"How d'ye do?" said the cow: "How d'ye do?"
said the ass.

" Take a seat," cried the cow, gently waving her hand.
" By no means, dear madam," said he, " while you
stand."
Then stooping to drink, with a complaisant bow,
" Ma'am, your health," said the ass :—" Thank you,
Sir," said the cow.

When a few of these compliments more had been pass'd,
They laid themselves down on the herbage at last ;
And waiting politely, (as gentlemen must,)
The ass held his tongue, that the cow might speak first.

Then, with a deep sigh, she directly began,
" Don't you think, Mr. Ass, we are injur'd by man ?
'Tis a subject that lies with a weight on my mind :
We certainly are much oppress'd by mankind.

" Now what is the reason, (I see none at all,)
That I always must go when Suke chooses to call ?
Whatever I'm doing, ('tis certainly hard,)
I'm forc'd to leave off to be milk'd in the yard.

" I've no will of my own, but must do as they please,
And give them my milk to make butter and cheese ;
I've often a great mind to kick down the pail,
Or give Suke a box on the ears with my tail."

" But, ma'am," said the ass, " not presuming to teach—
O dear, I beg pardon—pray finish your speech :
I thought you had finish'd, indeed," (said the swain,)
" Go on, and I'll not interrupt you again."

" Why, Sir, I was only just going to observe,
I'm resolv'd that these tyrants no longer I'll serve ;
But leave them for ever to do as they please,
And look somewhere else for their butter and cheese."

Ass waited a moment, to see if she'd done,
And then, " not presuming to teach,"—he begun—
" With submission, dear madam, to your better wit,
I own I am not quite convinc'd by it yet.

" That you're of great service to them, is quite true,
But surely they are of *some* service to you ;
'Tis their pleasant meadow in which you regale,
They feed you in winter, when grass and weeds fail.

" And then a warm covert they always provide,
Dear madam, to shelter your delicate hide.
For my *own* part, I *know* I receive much from man,
And for him, in return, I do all that I can."

The cow, upon this, cast her eyes on the grass,
Not pleas'd at thus being reprov'd by an ass ;
" Yet," thought she, " I'm determin'd I'll benefit by't,
For I really believe that the fellow is right."

THE SPIDER AND HIS WIFE.

In a little dark crack, half a yard from the ground,
An honest old spider resided ;
So pleasant, and snug, and convenient 'twas found,
That his friends came to see it for many miles round :
It seem'd for his pleasure provided.

Of the cares, and fatigues, and distresses of life,
This spider was thoroughly tir'd ;
So, leaving those scenes of contention and strife,
(His children all settled,) he came with his wife,
To live in this cranny retir'd.

He thought that the little his wife would consume,
'Twould be easy for him to provide her,
Forgetting he liv'd in a gentleman's room,
Where came, ev'ry morning, a maid and a broom,
Those pitiless foes to a spider!

For when, (as sometimes it would chance to befall,)
Just when his neat web was completed,
Brush—came the great broom down the side of the wall,
And, perhaps, carried with it web, spider, and all,
He thought himself cruelly treated.

One day, when their cupboard was empty and dry,
His wife, (Mrs. Hairy-leg Spinner,)
Said to him, "Dear, go to the cobweb, and try
If you can't find the leg or the wing of a fly,
As a bit of a relish for dinner."

Directly he went, his long search to resume,
(For nothing he ever denied her,)
Alas! little guessing his terrible doom,
Just then came the gentleman into his room,
And saw the unfortunate spider.

So, while the poor fellow, in search of his pelf,
In the cobweb continued to linger,
The gentleman reach'd a long cane from the shelf,
(*For certain good reasons, best known to himself,*
Preferring his *stick* to his *finger*:)

Then presently poking him down to the floor,
(Nor stopping at all to consider,)
With one horrid crash the whole bus'ness was o'er,
The poor little spider was heard of no more,
To the lasting distress of his widow!

THE VIOLET.

Down in a green and shady bed,
A modest violet grew,
Its stalk was bent, it hung its head,
As if to hide from view,

And yet it was a lovely flow'r,
Its colours bright and fair;
It might have grac'd a rosy bow'r,
Instead of hiding there.

Yet there it was content to bloom,
In modest tints array'd;
And there diffus'd its sweet perfume,
Within the silent shade.

Then let me to the valley go,
This pretty flow'r to see;
That I may also learn to grow
In sweet humility.

THE WAY TO BE HAPPY.

How pleasant it is, at the end of the day,
No follies to have to repent;
But reflect on the past, and be able to say,
That my time has been properly spent.

When I've done all my bus'ness with patience and care,
And been good, and obliging, and kind;
I lie on my pillow and sleep away there,
With a happy and peaceable mind.

But, instead of all this, if it must be confest
That I careless and idle have been;
I lie down as usual, and go to my rest,
But feel discontented within.

Then, as I dislike all the trouble I've had,
In future I'll try to prevent it;
For I never am naughty without being sad,
Or good—without being contented.

CONTENTED JOHN.

One honest John Tomkins, a hedger and ditcher,
Altho' he was poor, did not want to be richer;
For all such vain wishes to him were prevented,
By a fortunate habit of being contented.

Tho' cold were the weather, or dear were the food,
John never was found in a murmuring mood;
For this he was constantly heard to declare,
What he could not prevent he would cheerfully bear.

"For, why should I grumble and murmur?" he said,
"If I cannot get meat, I can surely get bread;
And tho' fretting may make my calamities deeper,
It never can cause bread and cheese to be cheaper."

If John was afflicted with sickness or pain,
He wish'd himself better, but did not complain,
Nor lie down to fret in despondence and sorrow,
But said, that he hop'd to be better to-morrow.

If any one wrong'd him, or treated him ill,
Why John was good-natur'd and sociable still;
For he said—that revenging the injury done,
Would be making two rogues, where there need be but one.

And thus honest John, tho' his station was humble,
Pass'd thro' this sad world without even a grumble ;
And 'twere well if some folks, who are greater and richer,
Would copy John Tomkins, the hedger and ditcher.

THE STAR.

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are !
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.

When the blazing sun is gone,
When he nothing shines upon,
Then you show your little light,
Twinkle, twinkle, all the night.

Then the traveller in the dark,
Thanks you for your tiny spark !
He could not see which way to go,
If you did not twinkle so.

In the dark blue sky you keep,
And often through my curtains peep,
For you never shut your eye
Till the sun is in the sky.

As your bright and tiny spark
Lights the traveller in the dark,
Though I know not what you are,
Twinkle, twinkle, little star.

THE LITTLE LARK.

(Jane or Ann.)

I HEAR a pretty bird, but hark!
I cannot see it anywhere.
Oh! it is a little lark,
Singing in the morning air.
Little lark, do tell me why
You are singing in the sky?

Other little birds at rest,
Have not yet begun to sing;
Every one is in its nest,
With its head behind its wing:
Little lark, then, tell me why
You're so early in the sky?

You look no bigger than a bee,
In the middle of the blue;
Up above the poplar tree,
I can hardly look at you:
Little lark, do tell me why
You are mounted up so high?

'Tis to watch the silver star,
Sinking slowly in the skies;
And beyond the mountain far,
See the glorious sun arise:
Little lady, this is why
I am mounted up so high.

'Tis to sing a merry song
To the pleasant morning light;
Why stay in my nest so long,
When the sun is shining bright?
Little lady, this is why
I sing so early in the sky.

To the little birds below,
I do sing a merry tune ;
And I let the ploughman know
He must come to labour soon.
Little lady, this is why
I am singing in the sky.

THE MEADOWS.

(Jane or Ann.)

We'll go to the meadows, where cowslips do grow,
And buttercups, looking as yellow as gold ;
And daisies and violets beginning to blow ;
For it is a most beautiful sight to behold.

The little bee humming about them is seen,
The butterfly merrily dances along ;
The grasshopper chirps in the hedges so green,
And the linnet is singing his liveliest song.

The birds and the insects are happy and gay,
The beasts of the field they are glad and rejoice,
And we will be thankful to God every day,
And praise His great name in a loftier voice.

He made the green meadows, He planted the flowers,
He sent His bright sun in the heavens to blaze ;
He created these wonderful bodies of ours,
And as long as we live we will sing of His praise.

THE WASP AND THE BEE.

A Wasp met a Bee that was just buzzing by,
And he said, " My dear cousin, can you tell me why
You are loved so much better by people than I ?

" Why, my back is as bright and as yellow as gold,
And my shape is most elegant, too, to behold ;
Yet nobody likes me for that, I am told ! "

Says the Bee, " My dear cousin, it 's all very true,
But indeed they would love me no better than you,
If I were but half as much mischief to do !

" You have a fine shape, and a delicate wing,
And they own you are handsome, but then there 's one thing
Which they cannot put up with, and that is your sting.

" Now I put it at once to your own common sense,
If you are not so ready at taking offence
As to sting them on every trifling pretence ?

" Though my dress is so homely and plain, as you see,
And I have a small sting, they're not angry with me,
Because I'm a busy and good-natured Bee ! "

From this pray let ill-natured people beware,
Because I am sure, if they do not take care,
That they'll never be loved, if they're ever so fair.

DISPLAY

THE HEROINES INTRODUCED.

"I WISH we were not going this evening," said Elizabeth; "they say Mrs. Fellows is so clever, and so satirical, that I shall be afraid of speaking a word."

"Dear now, I am glad we are going," replied Emily, "we have heard so much of Mrs. Fellows; and I had not thought about being afraid of her."

"I trust of all things they will not ask us to play. I would not play before Mrs. Fellows for all the world," added Elizabeth.

"I had rather not, certainly," said Emily, "and yet I do not think I should mind it so very much."

"How I envy you having so much courage," said Elizabeth, "I am such a silly, timid creature!"

It was true that the dispositions of these young people differed essentially: they belonged to opposite classes of character; which—to borrow terms used long ago in a different sense, in scholastic controversy—might be called, *Nominalists* and *Realists*.

Emily was a *Realist:* whatever she did, said, or *looked*, was in earnest: she possessed the grace of SIMPLICITY;—a simplicity which appeared alike in her virtues, and her faults. It was neither from insensibility, nor self-conceit, that she thought of her introduction to this formidable lady with so much composure. Modest people are not the soonest frightened:—"I wonder what they will

think of *me?*" is not the inquiry of humility, but of vanity.

Now this inquiry Elizabeth was making perpetually: to speak, to move, to weep, or to smile, were with her but so many manœuvres, which she was practising for *effect*, and to attract attention. The prospect, the picture, or the poem, which Emily admired with all her *heart*, Elizabeth admired with all her *eloquence;* too intent upon exhibiting her taste or sensibility, to be truly the subject of either.

It was this disposition to *display*, that made her anxious about the expected visit: Emily was going that she might see Mrs. Fellows; Elizabeth, that Mrs. Fellows might see *her*.

SENSIBILITY: VISIT OF ELIZABETH AND EMILY TO STOKELY.

When they reached Stokely, and entered the room, they found Miss Weston playing a lively tune, to which the children were dancing by the light of the fire. They were cordially welcomed; and Emily felt very happy as the circle formed, and she took her seat by the side of Miss Weston. She looked round, and saw none but cheerful faces; it did not appear to be that kind of cheerfulness which is made at a moment's warning by the rap at the door; they looked as though they had been cheerful and happy all day long.

Elizabeth appeared this evening dressed with taste, but rather over dressed for the occasion: and this did not pass unobserved; for in the simple action of walking from the door to her chair there was a *manner* that

asked for observation—that is, it was *not* a simple action.

Mr. Leddenhurst was looking over a review. "Poetry! poetry in abundance for you, ladies," said he, "if you like it."

"Oh, indeed, I am passionately fond of poetry," said Elizabeth.

"Passionately fond, are you? Here is an article then, that perhaps, you will do us the favor to read."

Elizabeth readily complied, for she was fond of reading aloud.

"We select the following passage," said the injudicious critic, "for the sake of three lines, which we are persuaded no reader of sensibility will peruse without tears."

"No reader of sensibility!" thought Elizabeth; but how should she discover for certain which they were in that long quotation? To cry at the wrong place, she justly calculated, would be a worse mistake than not crying at the right; but, fortunately, as she approached the conclusion, the lines in question caught her eye, considerately printed in italics. She read them with great pathos; and as she read, tears—two undeniable tears—rolled deliberately down her cheeks. Having succeeded in this nice hydraulic experiment, she looked at Emily, and observed with some satisfaction that there was no trace of tears on *her* cheeks; but glancing round at the rest of the company, she felt rather disconcerted to see how perfectly composed every body was looking.—"Are they not extremely affecting?" said she, appealing to Mrs. Leddenhurst.

"Really I can scarcely tell," said Mrs. Leddenhurst; "I always find, that nothing more effectually drives

away my tears than having them bespoke: pathetic touches, to produce their effect, should take the reader by surprise, I think."

"I question if those lines could have *surprised* me into tears," said Mr. Leddenhurst.

"O not *you*, papa!" said Richard, laughing; "men should never cry, should they, if they can help it?"

"Neither men nor women should cry, if they can help it," answered his father.

"I can remember seeing papa cry, though," whispered little Lucy, "when he was telling mamma how glad the shabby looking gentleman looked at the sight of the guinea; I saw a tear in the corner of his eye, just for a moment."

Elizabeth was so much absorbed by the little vexation she had just experienced, and by endeavouring to ascertain the precise construction that had been put upon her sensibility, that the conversation had taken a different turn before she was aware, and she found Mr. Leddenhurst in the middle of a long story. He had travelled; and was giving an account of a night he once spent in a Laplander's hut; which the children thought so very entertaining, that they often begged their father to tell it them over again; and they now came from the further end of the room, where they were quietly at play, saying,

"Oh, papa is telling about the little Laplanders!"

Elizabeth suddenly roused herself to the appearance of lively attention. They who feel interest have no need to feign it: but it rarely happened that Elizabeth was really interested by conversation to which she was only a *listener*. The vain and selfish deprive themselves of

most *genuine* pleasures. There was nothing now, for her, but to wait till the recital was finished: to wait for *her* turn, with that sort of impatience which good breeding itself can sometimes scarcely conceal, in those whose sole object in society is, *to make an impression*. But Mr. and Mrs. Leddenhurst had seen the little artifices of vanity practised by greater proficients than Elizabeth. She was not the first person in whom they had observed a greedy impatience to squeeze into conversation every scrap of information that can be collected upon the point in hand. Little do they imagine, who angle for admiration by this and similar methods, how completely their end is defeated, at least with respect to acute observers. They who are intent upon being *heard* and *seen*, are not often *observers;* nor can they believe how easily they are *detected* by those who know how to *hear* and *see*. The involuntary admiration which is inspired by wit or beauty, and especially the respect for talents and acquirements, are, to say the least, *neutralized*, if but a suspicion be excited that they are used as articles of *display*.

Elizabeth would have been really agreeable, if she could but have forgotten to be charming. Her form was delicate, her face handsome; and it might have been interesting, if the constant effort to make it so, had not given a restlessness to her features which was far from pleasing: her eye first shot its spark, and then looked about for the damage. In her sensibility, especially, there was an appearance of *artificialness*, which rendered it difficult to feel real sympathy with her.

"There is nothing I have ever wished for so much as to travel," said Elizabeth, when Mr. Leddenhurst had

finished his narration; "it must be so excessively interesting, I should think, especially with an intelligent companion."

"We who are obliged to stay at home," said Mrs. Leddenhurst, "may, however, enjoy by our fire-sides most of the information, and a considerable share of the entertainment, of going abroad, we are now so abundantly supplied with the observations of travellers."

"Yes," replied Elizabeth, "and there is no kind of reading I am so partial to as voyages and travels, they are so uncommonly interesting."

"Very interesting indeed," said Mrs. Leddenhurst, "though I cannot say there is *no* kind of reading that I am so partial to."

"Oh, certainly not; I did not mean to say *no* kind of reading, but—but really I am surprised," continued she, "that Mr. Leddenhurst was never prevailed upon to publish his tour; it would, I am sure, have been such an acquisition!"

At this Mrs. Leddenhurst only smiled, and began talking to Emily, who had fallen into a reverie in *her* turn; but it was not about herself nor the company: her imagination had been carried by Mr. Leddenhurst's narrative to polar regions; and was wandering over fields of ice, and arctic snows, where,

"————the shapeless bear,
"With dangling ice all horrid, stalks forlorn;"

when Mrs. Leddenhurst recalled her recollection.

ON INDIRECT BOASTING.

THERE are some unfortunate persons, who seem to make little other use of conversation than as a means of petty, personal aggrandizement; and who, in consequence of this wretched propensity, little as they suspect it, subject themselves to the contempt or pity of those whose opinions are most valuable.

There is a class of *speechmakers*, who contrive by ingenious allusions, and hints casually dropped, to *let you know* what they feared you might not otherwise find out: they are letting off fireworks; and when it seems all over, and there are only a few pitiful sparks dropping about—off goes another!—*but it never succeeds.* For whether it be—"my uncle's carriage,"—or, "my friend the colonel," or "the general,"—or, "when I was on the continent,"—or, "only a *jeu d'esprit* of mine, a very foolish thing,"—or, "Latin? Oh, scarcely a word, I assure you,"—or, "a cousin of mine knows him intimately,"—or, "when I write to Lady so and so;" or all these one after another—such hints afford a kind of information which is not intended to be conveyed: they prove, not only that her uncle keeps his carriage—that she knows a colonel and a general—that she has been on the continent—that she writes poetry (and foolish things)—that she learns Latin—that her cousin knows a learned man—that she corresponds with Lady so and so; but they show that she is anxious you should *know* it; that *she* considers such things as distinctions; and that they are to her new or rare, for people seldom boast of that which they have always been accustomed to; and what is worst of all, it must create a suspicion that she has

nothing more left to boast of: for she who gives out that she reads Latin, is not likely to conceal her knowledge of Hebrew or Greek; and she who intimates that she writes to Lady A—, would assuredly let you know it, if she had any connexion with Ladies B—, C—, or D—.

But the symptoms of vanity are almost infinitely various: there is no genus comprehending a greater variety of species. The silly girl, vain of her dress and complexion, is really one of the least offensive, and most pardonable of all; for in proportion to the value of the thing boasted of, is the meanness of the boast: hence, a pedant is more contemptible than a coxcomb.

But whatever particular character it assume, that mind is in miserable bondage, whose happiness is dependant on the opinion, especially on the applause of others. It is a bondage which seems always the concomitant of a general moral imbecility, whether that imbecility be cause or effect.

THE EDUCATION OF EMILY.

Emily's introduction to her new friends at this period of her life, was a more important circumstance than she was aware of, highly as she felt disposed to value their friendship. Notwithstanding her many good qualities, she was not free from faults: she was sensible, modest, and ingenuous, but she was—*eighteen.*

She lost her mother early; and her father, although desirous to do every thing in his power for the welfare of his only child, was not aware of the best means to promote it. He was a man of business, and it did not occur to him that any thing more was requisite, than

to send her for several years to an established school, from whence he expected her to return completely educated. He did not consider, that it is often not until the time when young persons leave school, that the real ardour for self-improvement is excited, which it is of so great importance to direct and cultivate.

Girls of entirely common minds, take leave of their books, and often of the accomplishments which they have acquired at such a vast expense of money and time, at the conclusion of the last half year; delighted to exchange them for the pleasures from which they had been reluctantly restrained during the tedious periods from Christmas to Midsummer, and from Midsummer to Christmas. Revelling for a few giddy years in vanity and idleness, they by and by settle in life; and as the vigour and interest of youthfulness subside, sink into those ordinary beings, who with thousands of their kind, eat, drink, and sleep; dress, visit, and die: while young people in whom the spark of intelligence has been enkindled, are exposed to different dangers. Pride, pedantry, romance, and many other evils, according to the accidents of disposition and education, are the frequent consequences of partial and uncorrected cultivation.

Emily's *simplicity* was her grand preservative from many of these perils, and she possessed a native delicacy of taste, which defended her from others. With the choice of all the volumes in the circulating library of a country town, her reading had been tolerably select. When she left school, her father informed her, that "he did not approve of young girls reading novels:" but he had little hope that the prohibition would be regarded, because he firmly believed that "young girls *would* read novels." But in this instance, Emily had less temptation

to disobedience than many : from whatever was common, low, or profane, she always shrunk with dislike. Good taste had in some measure supplied the place of good principle ; and of all the gifts of nature, that instinctive *fineness* of feeling is most estimable, of which education itself can but produce an imitation.

Emily read and felt poetry, and lived in its atmosphere : but as none of the beings around her did the same, she shut herself up in her own world of enjoyment ; neither desiring to interfere with the pursuits and pleasures of other people, nor wishing them to participate in hers. She loved her father tenderly, and was obedient and attentive to him : but he was so wholly incapable of entering into her feelings concerning those things which she thought most interesting, that she never attempted to address him in a language which she knew would have been quite unintelligible : while he, satisfied with her cheerful looks and dutiful conduct, dreamed not of the ideal world his daughter inhabited. He studied to make her happy by supplying her with all the comforts and pleasures his circumstances would allow : but it was not for these things that Emily felt most obliged to her father. Having never known the want of a constant supply of those daily comforts, which are as really necessary to the intellectual as to the unrefined, she had not learned to value them. It was the liberty she enjoyed to pursue her *own* pleasures ; the luxury of being alone ; the inestimable privilege of not being obliged to talk, &c. that inspired her with gratitude, and made her think him the best and kindest of fathers. And indeed this gratitude was not misplaced : for that sort of kindness, which allows the object of it as far as possible, to pursue its *own* plan of happiness, is that

alone which makes the difference between *gratitude* and *thanks*. It is but a selfish kind of generosity to load persons with favors they do not value, and thwart them in the very point on which *their* pleasure depends.

There was one standing trial of Emily's good-nature; this was, that her father expected her to read the newspaper to him every day after dinner. The sight of the newspaper was disagreeable to her; and politicks were worse than uninteresting: however, she thought of Milton's daughters, and made the daily sacrifice with a good grace; and by degrees attained so great a proficiency in the art of reading and carrying on her own train of thought at the same time, that it became less burdensome. The kind "thank ye, dear," with which her father always repaid her when she finished her task, reproached her more than any thing, if she had performed it with reluctance.

The company of "uninteresting people," as Emily secretly styled the whole circle of her acquaintance, would have been grievously burdensome but for this habit of abstraction, which enabled her to take some apparent share in conversation, and to enjoy her own delicious musings at the same time. It could not, however, escape the observation of her friends, that her own contemplations seemed more agreeable to her than their company; and she had sometimes been called proud: but it was not by those who knew her; those who had opportunities of witnessing her invariable sweetness and good-nature, and the obliging alacrity with which, when once roused from a reverie, she would do any thing, for any body; though it sometimes happened that her services were required before her attention was excited.

CHARACTERS:

MISS OLIVER.

They were just entering on a disquisition upon poetical taste, when a morning call interrupted the conversation. It was Miss Oliver; one of the standing inhabitants of the town.

She belonged to a class of ladies, of whom it may be said, that they are *good for nothing but to be married.* Let no intellectual *Cœlebs* object to the expression; it is not intended to recommend her to *him.*

At eighteen she was tolerably pretty; and about as lively as mere youth will make those who have no native spring of vivacity. Her education, like her mind, was common. If she had married, she might have performed the ordinary offices of domestic life as well as they are ordinarily performed. Though she had not cared much for her husband, she would probably have loved her children; and the maternal duties and affections of themselves, impart a degree of interest to any character. But she did not marry, although trained to consider marriage as the grand object at which she was to aim.

Year after year passed away; during which, her attendance at the Christmas rout, the Easter ball, the summer races, was tiresomely punctual. At length it became necessary by extra attention to dress, and studious vivacity, to show that she was still young; but even that time was gone by, and she now only laboured to prove that she was not *old.* Disappointment, and the discontent occasioned by the want of an *object* in life, had drawn lines in her face which time might still have spared. It sunk down into dismal vacuity after every

effort at sprightliness: for without mind enough to be pensive, she was habitually dull.

Her circumstances did not allow her the relief of frequenting places of fashionable resort; she contrived to exist with no other air, and no better water, than were to be obtained in her native parish. The few families in the neighbourhood with whom, in her youthful days she used to spend her Christmas, or her Whitsuntide, were dead, or dispersed, or the acquaintance was broken off: so that the routs and card-parties of this little town were the only relief to her monotony; where she went to meet the same faces, and to say and hear the same *nothings* as ever.

It was no wonder, therefore, that the veriest trifle—a new stitch, or a new pattern—became to her an affair of importance; that the gossip of the neighbourhood seemed essential to her existence; and that, without malignity, scandal should become an entertainment, and mischief a recreation.

Having conversed for a short time with Mrs. Leddenhurst, in a strain of *commonness* that forbad the supposition of an original thought having ever by any accident strayed into her brain, she took leave. As Mr. Leddenhurst shut the door after her, Emily was greatly surprised to hear him say, "Every human being is interesting." Thinking her, and most other human beings uninteresting, she could not understand this at all: but to Mr. Leddenhurst, who was an observer of human nature, and studied it as the most important and interesting of sciences, every specimen was valuable, for every specimen presents *some* shade of variety. But there was a still higher interest which the meanest of

his fellow-creatures did not fail to excite. Christian benevolence was with him, an active principle; and the earnest desire of doing good, led him to seek and cultivate the society of those, whom the pride of intellect, or the selfish indulgences of taste, would have taught him only to shun.

"What an alteration," said he, "an interest in religion would make in such a countenance as that lady's!"

Nor was it uncharitable of him to apprehend that she was one of the *many* who pay no decided regard to it. There is a *vulgar cant* belonging to people of the world, which as effectually betrays *their* fraternity, as any peculiar phraseology called *religious cant*, can do.

"I never remember," continued Mr. Leddenhurst, "observing such an expression of listless vacuity in the face of the meanest Christian. Habitual thoughts of God, and of eternity, *will* impress *some* trace of mind upon the countenance. What a new world of hope and happiness might be opened to such a character! Caroline, let us cultivate her acquaintance."

BETSY PRYKE.

In this exigence, they gladly accepted the assistance of two or three young women of a lower class, who came forward to offer their services. They appeared quite competent to the undertaking, having been formerly engaged in a small Sunday school, which fell off for want of the means to support it.

One of these, well known by the name of "Betsy Pryke," was a person of some repute among her friends and acquaintance.

She was a sharp, neat, compact, conceited looking person, who kept a little haberdasher's shop in the market-place. By the aid of some quickness, a good memory, and what was called *a great taste for reading*, she had accumulated a curious mass of heterogeneous lore, with which she was accustomed to astonish, if not to edify, her simple neighbours. She was particularly fond of hard names, and words of many syllables; and her conversation was frequently interspersed with quotations from Young, Hervey, and Mrs. Rowe.

Her customers, in addition to their purchase, were generally favoured with a little learning, gratis, while she was weighing the pins or measuring the tape; and even before those whom she could not venture to entertain with familiar discourse, some fine word, or *knowing* remark, was dexterously dropped, to let them know *what she was;* and her behaviour to this class of her customers was marked by that mixture of pertness and servility, which is commonly produced by self-conceit in dependent circumstances.

To these qualifications Miss Pryke added a flaming profession of religion. She was one of the very few inhabitants of this town who appeared to pay any serious regard to it; and among those pious, simple people, who possessed little of the wisdom or knowledge of this world, she passed for a pattern of zeal and sanctity. Miss Pryke's creed, was all *creed:* she was fond of *holding argumentations* upon a few points on which she considered herself to have attained more *light* than the generality of plain Christians. She appeared to take little interest in the practical parts of Christianity, about which there is no controversy; and upon those who

made any thing more than a distant or casual reference to these subjects, she readily bestowed her enlightened pity. They were "persons in the dark;" and if they were ministers, they were "blind leaders of the blind," and knew nothing of the *gospel*. She valued *comfort* much above consistency, and was more observant of her *frames* than of her temper.

She could quote Scripture with great facility; but was fonder of hearing it *allegorized* than explained. She had by rote the whole string of those phrases, and particular modes of expression which pass current among some good people, and which, although frequently used with the utmost sincerity, are very far from being evidences of it.

MRS. PALMER.

Mrs. Palmer was clever; and had a vast deal of taste in laying out gardens, and fitting up rooms, and setting out dinners. Her grand object in life was, *to enjoy herself*; and her selfishness was refined, and perfect in its kind. She was a good wife, a kind mother, an obliging neighbour, as far as ever she could be consistently with this object, but no further. She had an easy, pleasing address; and her politeness was so unremittingly attentive, that it looked almost like friendship. Whatever did not demand any real sacrifice of her own pleasure or convenience was done, and done in the most obliging manner possible; but really to deny herself for the sake of another, was a species of virtue which she left to be practised by such good sort of people as chose it; to her it appeared foolishness, especially as she could decline

her services with such masterly adroitness, with such a gentle, sympathising address, that the cold selfishness of her heart often escaped detection.

Her feelings were naturally violent: but she had such an extreme dislike of being uncomfortable, that she rarely suffered them to be very troublesome to her. When the news arrived that her only and darling son had died abroad of the yellow fever, many people thought she would not long survive the intelligence. Her sorrow at first was ungovernable. She said she should never have another happy hour: but it is easier to be distracted for a week than to be sorrowful for life; and Mrs. Palmer discovered surprisingly soon, that she was still in possession of all those good things on which her daily pleasure depended. She had no son, it was true; but she had her pleasant house, and handsome furniture; luxurious fare, and a healthy appetite; a fine person, and expensive ornaments. She could still walk, and ride, and visit, and see company; and build her grotto, and attend her green-house, and arrange her cabinet; so that she recovered her cheerfulness rapidly. There was nothing in her mind with which sorrow could *amalgamate;* it was an unwelcome and unintelligible foreigner.

By her son's dying at a distance, she was spared, what were to her, the most shocking circumstances attending such an event.

Death—that one thing which the sceptic *must* believe, and to which the worldly *must* submit—was that which she most disliked to think about; and she studiously avoided whatever was likely to remind her of it. She shrunk from the survey of its gloomy apparatus; and was really glad that all that part of the affair was

transacted so far off as Jamaica. The opening of the family vault was a circumstance she particularly dreaded: *that* was a place she did not like to think of; and still less to recollect, that she must *herself* one day, lie down in that dark chamber. Whenever the unwelcome thought was forced upon her, she instantly recurred to the soundness of her constitution, and the vigorous means she used to preserve it. Besides which, she avoided perils by water and perils by land; was the first to foresee evil and hide herself; and to flee from contagion and every form of danger. Thus, by a common but strange kind of deception, feeling as though to delay death were to escape it.

She thought it prudent, however, to make some provision for the distant day; and was, accordingly, constant at church, and charitable to the poor: by which means she concluded all would be safe, whenever she should be under the absolute necessity of going to Heaven.

THE SOLDIERS ARRIVE AT BROADISHAM.

One spring evening, Elizabeth had taken her accustomed seat by the side of Miss Pryke's counter. While they were talking, she sometimes put aside the shawls and ribbons that blinded the window with the end of her parasol, to see what was passing without. But there was nothing to be seen except some children at play in the middle of the square—and Mr. Preston standing in his usual position at his shop door—and old Mr. and Mrs. Parsonson returning from their evening walk—and the setting sun shining on the old market-cross, just as it did a hundred years ago.

It was seldom that any thing happened to disturb the tranquillity of this remote place: except that a show, or a conjurer, or a company of strolling players sometimes stopped to amuse the inhabitants for a night or two, in their way to the county town. But suddenly their conversation was interrupted by the sound of distant music. Elizabeth started from her seat, exclaiming:

"Hark, Miss Pryke! what can that be? the bass-drum I declare!"

For now it came nearer and louder, and presently a full band, in gay green and white, playing a lively march, followed by the regiment, and all the boys and girls of Broadisham, crowded into the market-place.

"How partial I am to military music!" said Elizabeth, as she stood nodding to the tune; while rank after rank passed the shop door.

This was a lively evening for Broadisham: it was all bustle and animation: maids and mistresses, masters and men, appeared at their doors and windows. Trains of soldiers, stooping their tall caps, were seen entering the lowly doors of the Angel, the King's Arms, and the Red Lion; while a party of officers assembled before the gate of the new Hotel.

"THE SOLDIER'S ADIEU".

"What shall I play?" said she, turning over the leaves of the music-book. "The Soldier's Adieu—that's a sweet thing! shall I try it?"

"If you please," said Mrs. Leddenhurst.

Elizabeth played, and began to sing; but stopped presently, as though unable to proceed.

" Why don't you sing ? " said Emily. " Do sing ! "

" I cannot sing very well this evening," said she, looking distressed ; and added aside to Emily, " You *must not* ask me to sing *those* words."

After attempting a few more notes she stopped again, and leaning back upon Emily, begged for air, and water.

The window was thrown open, and Mr. Leddenhurst led her to the sofa ; where, after a few hysterical sighs, she found herself a little better.

" Emily, my love, lend me your arm," said she, rising ; " I shall soon recover in the air, it's nothing but the heat of the room."

So Emily led her friend to an arbour in the garden ; where, as soon as they were seated, Elizabeth leaned her head upon Emily's neck, and burst into tears.

" What is the matter ? " said Emily. " Are you ill, dear Elizabeth—or has any thing grieved you ? "

She continued to weep and sigh, but made no answer.

" I am sure," resumed Emily, after a short silence, " I do not desire to know any thing you wish to conceal ; but if I can guess why you are so unhappy—"

" Oh, then I have betrayed myself ! " exclaimed Elizabeth, hiding her face.

" Betrayed yourself ! what do you mean, Elizabeth ? I only thought that perhaps you were sorry about going to the ball, and giving up the Sunday school ; and if—"

" Oh, my dear ! " interrupted Elizabeth, " you do not know, you cannot guess—it is quite impossible that any one should ever discover the cause of my uneasiness : that must ever remain a secret in my own bosom."

" Then certainly I shall not inquire," said Emily. " Will you like to walk ? "

"No, stay a moment; forgive my weakness, Emily, and let me talk to you about my sorrow, although I cannot reveal the source of it."

"As long as you please, but take care, or I shall find it out."

"Oh dear! oh dear! oh dear me!" said Elizabeth.

"Dear me!" said Emily.

"Do you think Mr. Leddenhurst observed the words of that song?" inquired Elizabeth.

"I can't tell indeed," replied Emily.

"How silly it was of me to attempt to play it!"

"Why so?"

Elizabeth looked down, and sighed.

"How beautifully the sun is setting!" observed Emily, who found it difficult to maintain her part of the conversation.

At length Elizabeth broke another silence by saying, "Emily, I know I may confide in you; will you promise faithfully never to betray me, if I tell you all my heart?"

"Yes, you may depend upon me," said Emily.

"But how shall I confess my weakness?" resumed Elizabeth; "cannot you guess?—Oh, Emily, if you had ever loved, you would know how to feel for me!"

"Dear! are you in love?" said Emily, simply.

"Hush! my dear creature!" cried Elizabeth; "but what," continued she, in a low voice, "what but this fatal attachment could have led me to act as I have done?"

"Do you know now," said Emily, after running over in her mind the list of all the beaux and bachelors she knew, "do you know I am entirely at a loss to think who you can be at all attached to."

" Oh, my dear, that fatal regiment ! " cried Elizabeth.

" Already ! " said Emily.

" You do not know him, or you would not be surprised.'

" Is it that tall, brave looking officer, that I have seen walking with your father ? "

" No, that's Captain Scot ; he is not particularly tall ; you'd not be so much struck at first sight : but indeed he has paid me such attentions ! though I know he is only flirting with me," said Elizabeth, sighing.

" Then indeed, Elizabeth, I hope you will endeavour to overcome it," said Emily, " and as it is so very recent, I should think with a little effort—"

" A little effort ! Oh, Emily, you know nothing about it ; never, never ; it cannot be overcome ! "

POETRY AND REALITY.

——" No, this way," cried Emily as she was conducting the widow Jones to her new dwelling.

" Dear miss ! where are you a fetching of me ? 'twas never worth a while to turn such an old woman as me out of my house and home," said she, in a crying tone, as she went hobbling after Emily.

" But I tell you," said Emily, " you should not be thinking of your old cottage now." Yet in spite of all her remonstrances, the widow Jones went groaning and grumbling all the way to Stokely.

Richard and Caroline, and Lucy, were anxiously waiting their arrival at the garden gate.

Emily, as she approached, called eagerly to them to stand out of the way that they might not intercept the view of the dwelling ; which, with the little white gate

and rustic porch peeping under the trees, had certainly a very pretty effect.

"What do you think of that?" said she, looking eagerly at the widow.

"Deary me!" said she.

"Do you think it pretty? then this is where you are to live; so do not be fretting any more about your old cottage, for you are to live here," repeated Emily. "Isn't it a pretty little retired place for you now?"

"I thank you, and his honour, and the ladies, a thousand and a thousand times," said she, casting a forlorn glance at the thick shade that environed her dwelling.

"What, don't you like it?" said Emily.

"Why dear, I can't mislike it," said she, "here's a power of trees, to be sure! but 'twill be more lightsome come winter."

"But that is the beauty of it," said Emily. "Come then, and see if it is not comfortable inside."

Emily indeed had spared no pains to make it so. The kettle was now boiling on the fire, and the little deal table was set out ready for tea. The widow's favourite cat had been dexterously conveyed away that morning, and Caroline and Lucy had kept her in safe custody all day. With indefatigable care and coaxing, and after various obstinate attempts to escape, they at last succeeded in making her lie down to sleep upon the hearth.

"Well a-day there's our puss!" exclaimed the widow, now looking *really* pleased.

This was the only thing that did not look strange to her; and novelty, much as it charms the young, is itself a grievance to the old.

Emily now only waited to point out some of the principal beauties and conveniencies of the new abode.

" See," said she, setting open the door, " I'll tell you what you should do these fine summer evenings. You must bring your knitting, and sit here to work in the porch ; you'll look so pretty sitting to knit in the porch ! and be sure," added she, " that you do not tear down the ivy that grows over your little window."

The widow Jones having promised to do, and not to do, all that she thought it reasonable to require, Emily only stood a moment at the door, surveying with a picturesque eye, the group formed by the old woman, her cat, and the tea-table ; and then took leave, saying, she would " now leave her to enjoy herself."

The evening before this, Emily had put the finishing stroke to her work ; and when it was done, she thought it looked such a snug little seclusion, that she very much longed to live there herself. It was a calm summer evening, she was alone, and she sat down in the porch to enjoy it, just at the time when the moonlight began to prevail over the twilight ; and Emily began to feel very poetically.

A scrap of paper that was left there rendered the temptation irresistible : but she had written only a few lines, when Mr. Leddenhurst appeared at the garden gate.

" What are you about now, Emily ? " said he.

Emily put by her verses, coloured, and said, " Nothing, sir ; " and then took him in to admire her contrivances. He did admire them, and she thought no more about her verses till she got home again, and found herself alone in her father's parlour. She then read them over, merely

to see if they were worth finishing; and she took a fresh piece of paper, and was just getting into the spirit of it again, when she heard her father's knock at the door; and he, with several other gentlemen, came bustling in, talking all together, and very earnestly, about a parish dispute which was to be decided the next day at the county assizes.

"I tell you, sir, they must lose their cause," said one of them—"Miss Grey, how d'ye do, ma'am—and I'll give you my reasons, Mr. Grey—"

"Take off these things, child," said her father, pushing away Emily's papers rather disrespectfully, and laying a pile of law-books on the table.

Emily took them off, and made her escape as fast as possible to her own room, thinking as she went, how foolish it was of her to write poetry. The verses were put by in a folio with several similar effusions, of which some were better, and some worse. They were mostly in a strain that to the uninitiated might appear inconsistent with Emily's lively and flourishing appearance; but nothing could be more unreasonable than requiring young writers of poetry to "prove their words;" unless it were, inflicting upon them some of the extraordinary things they sometimes wish for themselves when they are rhyming.

The verses Emily began writing this evening in the widow's porch were as follow.

Say spirit, if thou wanderest nigh,
Of every sylvan dale;
What forms unseen by mortal eye,
Frequent this leafy vale?

Perchance 'twas once the flowery court
Of merry elfin king;
Where fairy people lov'd to sport,
And tread the nightly ring.

The sun descending down the sky,
In floods of misty light,
Surveys it with his golden eye,
And makes the valley bright.

The moon, who rideth in her pride
At solemn midnight hour;
And sheds her radiance far and wide,
On turret, dome, and tower;

Here sleeps upon the chequered glade,
Nor finds a softer rest,
On myrtle bower, or classic shade,
Or ocean's silver breast.

And oft would I alone, resort
To this seclusion dear;
Unchecked to breathe the ardent thought,
Or shed th' unquestioned tear.

O nature! how thy charms beguile
Or soothe our cares to sleep:
Thou seem'st to smile with those who smile,
And weep with those who weep!

The vernal tint, the summer breeze,
E'en winter's aspect drear,
Thy woods, and vales, and skies, and seas,
Like friendship soothe and cheer.

The soul in thy serene retreats
Communion sweet may find;
But gay assemblies, crowded streets,
Are desert to the mind.

The throng where giddy mortals press,
Is solitude to me;
But nature, in her wildest dress,
Refined society.

LIEUTENANT ROBINSON.

"WHO are all these?" said Lieutenant Robinson, one of these evenings, as a new party entered the square.

"Gracious me! all the Leddenhursts," said Elizabeth, who would rather have avoided the interview.

"And who is that pretty figure in the cottage bonnet?" said he, as they came nearer.

"It's only Emily Grey," answered Elizabeth.

"How d'ye do, how d'ye do, Emily, my love, how are you;" said she, addressing her friends as they advanced.

She now introduced Lieutenant Robinson, and would have passed on, but they all seemed disposed to stay and chat, and Mr. Leddenhurst entered into conversation with her lover.

Never had he appeared to so much disadvantage to Elizabeth as at this moment, now that she saw him, not for herself, but for them; saw him too, by the side of Mr. Leddenhurst.

Her hand had fallen from his arm as they approached, and she now began talking as fast as possible to Mrs. Leddenhurst, Miss Weston, and Emily, to divert their attention from the conversation that was passing between the gentlemen.

Emily, who had raised her expectations rather unreasonably high, of a being whom it was possible to love in three weeks, was nearly guilty of the rudeness of

starting when she first beheld the mean figure, and fiercely vacant countenance of her friend's admirer.

"Is it possible!" said she to herself, and she looked about to avoid meeting the eye of Elizabeth.

In the mean time the lieutenant continued running on in his usual style of sprightly dulness to Mr. Leddenhurst, who stood looking down upon him with an eye of keen but candid observation.

"What a monstrous curious old cross you've got here!" said he, staring up, and tapping it with his cane.

"Well, good night," said Elizabeth, "it's cold standing in the wind;" and she walked off with her lover, feeling more uncomfortable than ladies *always* do when they walk off with their lovers.

When they reached home, Elizabeth threw herself on the sofa, saying,

"Don't talk to me; I am tired this evening, Mr. Robinson."

Thus repulsed, he walked backwards and forwards in the room for some time, half whistling; till, stopping on a sudden, he exclaimed,

"That Emily what d'ye call her, is a confounded pretty girl!"

"Do you think so?" said Elizabeth, rousing up: "Well, she does look rather pretty in her bonnet."

Here the lieutenant resumed his walk and his whistle; but the remark had a fortunate effect upon Elizabeth. The momentary jealousy made him appear surprisingly more agreeable, and worth *securing:* and while she sat watching him as he paced up and down in the dusk, she said to herself,

"He *whistles* uncommonly well."

THE SECRET.

A TREMENDOUS secret was discovered to Elizabeth a very short time after her marriage, in a letter from this uncle.—Lieutenant Robinson had been—a linen-draper.

He was a weak, hot-headed young man : a dislike to business, that is, to employment, and an opportunity he once had of trying on a military hat, inspired him with an ardent desire for the profession of arms. And at the expiration of his apprenticeship to his uncle, deaf to the remonstrances of his prudent friends, he commenced the life of a gentleman.

In order to escape the ridicule of his brother-officers, and to remove, if possible, the suspicions they evidently entertained of his origin, he thought it requisite to plunge into most of their extravagancies. In consequence of which—notwithstanding occasional supplies from his uncle, and the convenient practice of leaving every town at which they were stationed in debt—he was kept in perpetual embarrassments.

His alliance with Miss Palmer, therefore, appeared a very eligible measure. He had been confidently assured that her father was a man of handsome property, and this opinion every thing he saw at his house and table tended to confirm.

Elizabeth thought this discovery at once released her from all obligation to love, honor, or obey her husband. From that time she conducted herself towards him with coldness and haughtiness, which he bore with tolerable patience until the intelligence of her father's death, and the unexpected state of his affairs gave him, as he said, "a just right to resent it."

Trained in habits of show and expense, and wholly unaccustomed to economical calculation, Elizabeth had soon made alarming demands upon her husband's limited resources; which, depending upon her promised, but delayed portion, he had not thought it necessary to check.

The news of Mr. Palmer's insolvency made an immediate alteration in this respect. Nor did Elizabeth fully comprehend the nature of her misfortune, until the first time that for want both of money and credit, she was really obliged to deny herself something she wished for. With a strange feeling of impatient astonishment, she then discovered that she *must* do without, what she had said "it was absolutely impossible to do without." A scene of mutual upbraiding between herself and her husband was the consequence of this first lesson in economy, or rather in poverty. But they reproached each other, not for their faults, but their misfortunes—not for being imprudent, but for being poor.

THE MAJOR AND HIS WIFE.

After dinner the ladies walked in the garden; when Elizabeth contrived to take her friend aside for a few minutes. She found it however an awkward task, notwithstanding the vague and general terms she employed, to disclose those parts of her story which related to her husband's connexions.

"But, my dear child, what an unlucky thing you should ever have liked him!" said Mrs. Harrison. "Upon my word, my dear, I feel quite distressed for you."

"Only tell me what steps I ought to take," said Elizabeth; "I rely entirely on your friendship."

"Indeed, my dear, I should be excessively happy to advise you, and serve you I'm sure, in any way that lies in my power in this unpleasant affair; but really it's an awkward thing to interfere between man and wife: indeed I am not so much surprised that Lieutenant Robinson should consider it altogether most prudent to take the advice of his relations."

"But what then will become of me!" cried Elizabeth, weeping passionately.

"Come, come, my dear Mrs. Robinson, let me beg of you not to discompose yourself thus," said Mrs. Harrison. "To be sure," continued she, sighing, "we know it is our duty at all times to submit to what the Almighty is pleased to appoint for us. But really I must insist upon it, that you do not distress yourself in this manner; I can't endure to see you so unhappy. Here are all our friends!—for heaven's sake, my dear, dry your tears: shall I send you a glass of any thing?"

"Nothing, thank you," said Elizabeth, who felt, at this forlorn moment, the difference between a friend and an acquaintance. The others now joined them; and as her eye wandered from one smiling, selfish face to another—faces from which the unhappy had *nothing to hope*—she involuntarily thought of Emily, and Stokely. The major, however, was a friend nearer at hand; but she saw no more of him during the evening. When she returned at ten o'clock to her comfortless lodgings, she was surprised to find him in earnest conversation with her husband.

The major, who was very good-natured, had frequently

accommodated Lieutenant Robinson with small sums of money; which by this time had amounted to a debt that he was anxious to have discharged. He had been rather pressing on this subject of late; so that the lieutenant came to the resolution of disclosing to him the whole state of his affairs, and asking his advice on the present emergency. No sooner did the major understand that by resigning his commission he would be able to pay his debts, than he warmly urged him to comply: and it was not so difficult a matter to persuade him as it would once have been. He began to be weary of his present mode of life, of which the novelty had already worn off; and of the misery of being always in debt, and always short of money. His objections to business were less insurmountable than those of his lady; it was not pride, but idleness: and he now considered what a difference there would be between being master, and man.

"But then there's my wife," said he to the major. "If you had but seen the piece of work we had this morning! Let me beg of you, my dear sir, to try what you can do with her; she will not listen to me, that's for certain."

This task the major undertook; and when Elizabeth entered, he addressed her with an air of friendly interest, saying—

"Mrs. Robinson, we have just been talking over this awkward business of yours; and I do assure you very seriously, as I've been telling Robinson, I do not see any other plan in the world that as a man of honour he could adopt. In fact, if I were in his place, I should not hesitate a single instant about the business. Indeed,

for my own part, I should not feel any particular reluctance to—to—engaging in mercantile concerns—upon my life I shouldn't. If he were a single man," continued the major, observing the gathering gloom in Elizabeth's countenance, "it would be wholly a different affair; but when a man is responsible for the honour and happiness of a young and lovely woman—"

"Oh, do not talk of *my* happiness," cried Elizabeth, glancing expressively at her husband; "that is sacrificed for ever."

"Heaven forbid!" said the major, looking at his watch.

"So the major's been advising *of* me to lose no time about the business: and he thought I had better write to my uncle and Mr. Leddenhurst by return of post: and so you see, my dear, it's all settled," said Lieutenant Robinson, anxious to make the whole confession before his friend was gone.

"And I am extremely glad that every thing is so happily adjusted," said he, rising; and unwilling to wait the issue either of fainting-fits, or remonstrances, he took leave.

As the door closed upon the gay, agreeable major, Elizabeth felt herself abandoned to wretchedness. She had no inclination to go into hysterics, nor to remonstrate with her husband; but sat silent and motionless, watching him, while he was sealing and directing the letters for Stokely:—and now she felt *really* unhappy.

The loss of rank *is* a misfortune: and Elizabeth felt its utmost poignancy. She had always indulged that senseless contempt for trade, and *trades-people*, which is prevalent among the *vulgar* of *her* class: and she had not

had opportunities of knowing, that many of the *truly* noble—the excellent of the earth; that many persons of superior understandings, even of real taste, and respectable information—are to be found standing behind a country counter.

Having, however, no means of redress, Elizabeth suffered the necessary arrangements for their departure to take place undisturbed. During the few weeks they still remained at Chester, she never allowed herself to take any distinct view of the future: only indulging a kind of vague hope, that any thing so insupportable as the condition which threatened her, she should never be actually permitted to endure. And since nothing was now to be hoped from friends, relations, or acquaintance, she began to think that chance, or fate, or Providence, or something, would certainly interfere to prevent it.

THE VIOLIN.

(Under the influence of Emily, Elizabeth has found new sources of consolation.)

Elizabeth's good principles were too recently implanted to have attained the force of habits; and she found a constant reference to them necessary upon every fresh occasion. The exercise of patience, self-denial, forbearance, humility, was new and difficult. Indeed, had other dispositions, or better education rendered them of easier attainment, the strength and reality of her piety had been less apparent. It was in no instance more so than in her conduct towards her husband. She was solicitous not only to fulfil her ordinary duties towards him, but to win him to partake of that happiness which she herself enjoyed.

" If religion," she said, " were to do as much for him as it has for me, we might be almost happy together." And it was especially with this view that she endeavoured to subdue the constant propensity she felt to treat him with harshness or indifference.

" That tiresome violin ! " said she, one evening, as they caught its distant sound from the counting-house.

" I must say, however," said his sister, " that he does not suffer it to be very troublesome to us ; I do not remember ever seeing it brought into the parlour."

" No, I confess he has never done that," said Elizabeth.

" Do you think," she resumed, after a long silence, " do you think he would be pleased if I were sometimes to ask him to play to me ? "

" That he would, I am certain," said his sister.

That her resolution might not have time to relax, she went out immediately, and opening the door of the counting-house, said, good naturedly,

" Mr. Robinson, you keep it all to yourself ; why don't you come and play to us sometimes ? "

" Dear me ! I am sure I had no idea you would like to hear me play ! why it's what I should like of all things," said he, gathering up the music-books, and proceeding briskly to the parlour.

" What shall I play to you now ? " said he, in high good humour, " any thing you like, only say."

His sister chose something she thought Elizabeth would prefer ; and Elizabeth, pleased with herself, found her spirits enlivened even by her husband's bad fiddling ; and the evening passed more cheerfully than usual.

ESSAYS IN RHYME

THE MAYOR AND MAYORESS.

(From " Prejudice ".)

In yonder red-brick mansion, tight and square,
Just at the town's commencement, lives the mayor.
Some yards of shining gravel, fenc'd with box,
Lead to the painted portal—where one knocks :
There, in the left-hand parlour, all in state,
Sit he and she, on either side the grate.
But though their goods and chattels, sound and new,
Bespeak the owners *very well to do*,
His worship's wig and morning suit betray
Slight indications of an humbler day.

That long, low shop, where still the name appears,
Some doors below, they kept for forty years :
And there, with various fortunes, smooth and rough,
They sold tobacco, coffee, tea, and snuff.
There labell'd drawers display their spicy row,—
Clove, mace, and nutmeg : from the ceiling low
Dangle long *twelves* and *eights*, and slender rush,
Mix'd with the varied forms of *genus brush ;*
Cask, firkin, bag, and barrel, crowd the floor,
And piles of country cheeses guard the door.
The frugal dames came in from far and near,
To buy their ounces and their quarterns here.
Hard was the toil, the profits slow to count,
And yet the mole-hill was at last a mount ;

Those petty gains were hoarded day by day,
With little cost, for not a child had they ;
Till, long proceeding on the saving plan,
He found himself a *warm, fore-handed man :*
And being now arrived at life's decline,
Both he and she, they formed the bold design,
(Although it touch'd their prudence to the quick)
To turn their savings into stone and brick.
How many an ounce of tea and ounce of snuff,
There must have been consumed to make enough !

At length, with paint and paper, bright and gay,
The box was finish'd, and they went away.
But when their faces were no longer seen
Amongst the canisters of *black* and *green*,
—Those well known faces, all the country round—
'Twas said that had they levell'd to the ground
The two old walnut trees before the door,
The customers would not have missed *them* more.
Now, like a pair of parrots in a cage,
They live, and civic honours crown their age :
Thrice, since the Whitsuntide they settled there,
Seven years ago, has he been chosen mayor ;
And now you'd scarcely know they were the same ;
Conscious he struts, of power, and wealth, and fame,
Proud in official dignity, the dame :
And extra stateliness of dress and mien,
During the mayoralty, is plainly seen ;
With nicer care bestow'd to puff and pin
The august lappet that contains her chin.

Such is her life ; and like the wise and great,
The mind has journey'd hand in hand with fate

Her thoughts, unused to take a longer flight
Than from the left-hand counter to the right,
With little change, are vacillating still,
Between his worship's glory and the till.
The few ideas moving, slow and dull,
Across the sandy desert of her skull,
Still the same course must follow, to and fro,
As first they travers'd three-score years ago;
From whence, not all the world could turn them back,
Or lead them out upon another track.
What once was right or wrong, or high or low
In her opinion, always must be so:—
You might, perhaps, with reasons new and pat,
Have made *Columbus* think the world was flat;
There might be times of energy worn out,
When his own theory would *Sir Isaac* doubt;
But not the powers of argument combin'd,
Could make this dear good woman change her mind,
Or give her intellect the slightest clue
To that vast world of things she never knew.
Were but her brain dissected, it would show
Her stiff opinions fastened in a row,
Rang'd duly, side by side, without a gap,
Much like the plaiting on her Sunday cap.

It is not worth our while, but if it were,
We all could undertake to laugh at *her;*
Since vulgar prejudice, the lowest kind,
Of course, has full possession of her mind;
Here, therefore, let us leave her, and inquire
Wherein it differs as it rises higher.

—As for the few who claim distinction here,
The little gentry of our narrow sphere,

Who occupy a safe enclosure, made
Completely inaccessible to trade,
Where, 'tis a trespass on forbidden ground,
If any foot plebeian pass the bound ;—
Wide as the distance that we choose to make
For pride, precedence, and for custom's sake,
Yet, philosophic eyes (though passing fine)
Could scarcely ascertain the boundary line ;
So that, if any should be found at all,
The difference must be infinitely small.
The powder'd matron, who for many a year
Has held her mimic routs and parties here,
(Exchanging just the counter, scales, and till,
For cups of coffee, scandal, and quadrille)
Could boast nor range of thought, nor views of life,
Much more extended than our grocer's wife.
Although her notions may be better drest,
They are but vulgar notions at the best,—
Mere petrifactions, formed as time runs by,
Hard and unmalleable, and dull and dry,
Ne'er to the test of truth and reason brought,
Opinions made by habit, not by thought.

EGOTISM.

Ye pow'rs fantastic ! goblin, sylph and fay,
Whose subtle forms no laws material sway ;
Ethereal essences, that dart and glide
Wherever pleasure or caprice may guide ;
Who leap with equal ease, if ye are bid,
A lady's thimble and a pyramid,

And scale, alike regardless of a fall,
The parlour fender and the Chinese wall;
Slip through a key-hole, 'neath the listed door,
Or from the smallest crevice in the floor;
Or steer your way (and man's devices mock)
Through the dark mazes of a patent lock;—
Of you I sing not—but my theme shall be,
Of things as quick and volatile as ye,
—Those busy, subtle pronouns, *I* and *Me*.
Unsought, and unexpected they appear;
No barriers heed they, and no laws revere;
But wind and penetrate, with dextrous force,
Through all the cracks and crannies of discourse.

Of those with whom *self* proves the darling theme,
Not all indulge it in a like extreme;
Some have the sense to cover it, no doubt;
Would they had sense enough to root it out!
We therefore bring, as first upon the list,
The loud, loquacious, vulgar egotist;
Whose *I's* and *Me's* are scatter'd in his talk,
Thick as the pebbles on a gravel walk.
Whate'er the topic be, through thick and thin
Himself is thrust, or squeezed, or sidled in.
Conceiving thus his own importance swells,
He makes himself a part of all he tells;
And still to this he winds the subject round:—
Suppose his friend is married, sick, or drown'd,
He brought about the match, he lets you know;
Told him about Miss B. a year ago;
Or never shall forget, whate'er ensues,
How much he felt when first he heard the news.

A horseman thrown, lay weltering in the mud ;
He thought of something that would stop the blood.
A neighbour had a quarrel with his wife ;
He never saw such doings in his life !
A fire broke out at midnight in the town ;
He started up, threw on his flannel gown,
Seized an old hat full twice as large as his,
And said, *says he*, ' I wonder where it is ! '
Was doubtful if 'twere best to stay or go,
And trembled like a leaf, from top to toe.
In vain at times, some modest stander-by,
Catching a pause to make his brief reply,
Cries, ' dear ! ' or, ' only think ! ' or, ' so did I ; '
For he, by no such obstacles deterr'd,
Runs on, must tell his tale, and *will* be heard.

Woe to themselves, and woe to small and great,
When two good egotists are *tête-à-tête !*
A battle this, though not of swords, but tongues,
And he the victor who has strongest lungs.
Too eager each in what himself recites,
To see how little interest it invites,
Each takes the attention his companion shows,
For pleasure in the story as it goes ;
Though judging by himself, he might have known,
He is but waiting to begin his own,
Watching some gap in the opponent's speech
To force it in—like soldiers at a breach.

Few *talkers* can detain themselves to weigh
The true impression made by what they say ;
And of all talkers, egotists are last
E'en to suspect that they may talk too fast.

But often, while pursuing their career,
Rejoic'd that while they speak the rest must hear,
Some dry observer, whom they scarce perceive,
Sits smiling in his philosophic sleeve,
Impell'd, (while others carelessly condemn)
To blush for human nature and for them.

But 'tis not only with the loud and rude
That *self* betrays its nature unsubdued;
Polite attention and refin'd address
But ill conceal it, and can ne'er suppress:
One truth, despite of manner, stands confest—
They love themselves unspeakably the best.

Many monopolists of words have been
Unconscious quite of their besetting sin;
Of strong susceptibility possess'd,
Enraptur'd oft, and oft as much distrest,
They deem themselves, nor others deem them less,
Affectionate and feeling to excess:
The charge of selfishness, or unconcern
In other's weal, with indignation spurn,
And think their failing and their weakest part,
Is having, as the phrase is—too much heart.
But tender hearts as well were hearts of stone,
If what they feel is for themselves alone.

Have you no knowledge of this species? then
Take fair *Matilda* for a specimen;
Compare the sketch with faces you have known,
And ere you quite discard it—with your own.
What! has *Matilda*, then, no heart to feel
Generous emotion for another's weal?

Oh yes, she has,—the doubt she would declare
Hard and unjust to *her*, beyond compare ;
Her friends' and neighbours' interests to forget !
She were the last to bear that blame—but yet
Engross'd by cares and interests of her own,
In *fact*, she gladly lets her friends alone ;
Too eager, and too busy to reflect,
What others may, and what they do expect.

Calm observation, and acute survey
Of others and ourselves, are swept away
By that strong, rude velocity of thought,
Which meets no proper barrier where it ought,
But rushes on, impetuous and unstemm'd :—
Astonish'd, and abash'd, and self-condemn'd,
Would stand *Matilda*, could she once be shown
Not other people's failings, but her own ;
And see, how borne on that perpetual tide,
She thinks and talks of self, and none beside :
Then might she learn to check its rapid force,
Abate its swiftness, and divert its course,
Make it through other fields meandering go,
And drain, in time, the selfish channel low.

Matilda's friend, as few besides had done,
(A patient, quiet, unpretending one)
Sits cheerful and unwearied day by day,
To hear, as usual, what she has to say.
By long experience, now at length, she learns
To drop all reference to her own concerns ;
Th' insipid ' dear ! ' or ' sure ! ' too well declares
Impatience in discussing those affairs ;

And then, the eager tone and alter'd brow,
How much her own are dearer—so that now,
—Whether her heart be aching, or it swell
With some sweet hope, 'twould be a joy to tell—
She checks the inclination, to attend
To some new project of her eager friend :
—How she intends, as soon as winter's o'er,
To make a passage to the nursery door,
Enlarge the parlour where she loves to sit,
And have the Turkey carpet made to fit ;
Or, how she means next spring to go to town,
And then to have her aunt and uncle down.
Or if more intellectual in her mood,
How she employs her hours of solitude ;
—Her plans, how much they fail, or how succeed ;
What last she read, and what she means to read ;
What time she rises, and what time retires,
And how her deeds fall short of her desires.
All this is very well, perhaps you cry ;
True, if her friend might whisper, ' so do I.'

Whene'er from home *Matilda* has to go,
With the same theme her letters overflow ;
Sheet after sheet in rapid course she sends,
Brimful and cross'd, and written at both ends,
About her journey, visits, feelings, friends :
Still, still the same !—or if her friend had cast
Down in a modest postcript in her last,
Some line, which to transactions may refer,
Of vital consequence, perhaps to her,
Matilda in reply, just scrawls, you know
Along that slip on which the seal must go,
' I'm glad, or griev'd, to hear of so and so.'

How can she pardon such unkind neglects ?
Why 'tis poor human nature, she reflects ;
Judging with kindness, candour, and good sense,
Takes it from whence it comes, without offence :
And she, with meekness gifted to endure
The evil she laments, but cannot cure,
Too wise to censure or resent the ill,
Sees it, and smiles, as even friendship will ;
Resolves to watch *herself* with double toil,
And root the selfish weeds from nature's soil.
—And so should we, for we are selfish all,
Without one real exception since the fall.
Good nature and good sense in some, 'tis true,
Do much the vicious temper to subdue ;
While some, unwittingly allow its growth,
Who yet might fair pretensions make to both.
Of all impostors he least wisdom shows,
Who can and does upon himself impose.
Self-knowledge of all knowledge is the best ;
By most pretended, but by few possess'd.
That true philosophy not understood,
The aim to do ourselves or others good
Proves weak ;—for they who to themselves are blind,
Rarely attain the knowledge of mankind.
But self-acquaintance is a certain guide ;
That key unlocks ten thousand hearts beside ;
There, in a glass, the common cast is shown ;
—He knows the world who truly knows his own.

RECREATION.

—We took our work, and went, you see,
To take an early cup of tea.
We did so now and then, to pay
The friendly debt, and so did they.
Not that our friendship burnt so bright
That all the world could see the light;
'Twas of the ordinary *genus*,
And little love was lost between us:
We lov'd, I think, about as true
As such near neighbours mostly do.

At first, we all were somewhat dry;
Mamma felt cold, and so did I:
Indeed, that room, sit where you will,
Has draught enough to turn a mill.
'I hope you're warm,' says Mrs. G.
'O, quite so,' says mamma, *says she;*
'I'll take my shawl off by and by.'—
'This room is always warm,' *says I.*

At last the tea came up, and so,
With that, our tongues began to go.
Now, in that house you're sure of knowing
The smallest scrap of news that's going;
We find it *there* the wisest way
To take some care of what we say.

—Says she, 'there's dreadful doings still
In that affair about the *will*;
For now the folks in Brewer's Street
Don't speak to *James's*, when they meet.

Poor Mrs. *Sam* sits all alone,
And frets herself to skin and bone.
For months she manag'd, she declares,
All the old gentleman's affairs ;
And always let him have his way,
And never left him night nor day ;
Waited and watch'd his every look,
And gave him every drop he took.
Dear Mrs. *Sam*, it was too bad !
He might have left her all he had.'

' Pray ma'am,' says I, ' has poor Miss A.
Been left as *handsome* as they say ? '
' My dear,' says she, ' 'tis no such thing,
She'd nothing but a mourning ring.
But is it not *uncommon* mean
To wear that rusty bombazeen ! '
' She had,' says I, ' the very same
Three years ago, for—what's his name ? '—
' The Duke of *Brunswick*,—very true,
And has not bought a thread of new,
I'm positive,' said Mrs. G.—
So then we laugh'd, and drank our tea.

' So,' says mamma, ' I find it's true
What Captain P. intends to do ;
To hire that house, or else to buy—'
' Close to the tan-yard, ma'am,' says I ;
' Upon my word it's very strange,
I wish they mayn't repent the change ! '
' My dear,' says she, ' 'tis very well
You know, if *they* can bear the smell,'

'Miss F.' says I, 'is said to be
A sweet young woman, is not she?'
'O, excellent! I hear,' she cried;
'O, truly so!' mamma replied.
'How old should you suppose her, pray?
She's older than she looks, they say.'
'Really,' says I, 'she seems to me
Not more than twenty-two or three.'
'O, then you're wrong,' says Mrs. G.
'Their upper servant told our *Jane*,
She'll not see twenty-nine again.'
'Indeed, so old! I wonder why
She does not marry, then,' says I;
'So many thousands to bestow,
And such a beauty, too, you know.'
'A beauty! O, my dear Miss B.
You must be joking now,' says she;
Her *figure's* rather pretty,'——'Ah!
That's what *I* say,' replied mamma.

'Miss F.' says I, 'I've understood,
Spends all her time in doing good:
The people say her coming down
Is quite a blessing to the town.'
At that our hostess fetch'd a sigh,
And shook her head; and so, says I,
'It's very kind of her, I'm sure,
To be so generous to the poor.'
'No doubt,' says she, ''tis very true;
Perhaps there may be *reasons* too:—
You know some people like to pass
For *patrons* with the lower class.'

And here I break my story's thread,
Just to remark, that what she said,
Although I took the other part,
Went like a cordial to my heart.

Some inuendos more had pass'd,
Till out the scandal came at last.
' Come then, I'll tell you something more,'
Says she,—' Eliza, shut the door.—
I would not trust a creature here,
For all the world, but you, my dear.
Perhaps it's false—I wish it may,
—But let it go no further, pray ! '
' O,' says mamma, ' You need not fear,
We never mention what we hear.'
And so, we drew our chairs the nearer,
And whispering, lest the child should hear her,
She told a tale, at least too *long*
To be repeated in a song ;
We, panting every breath between,
With curiosity and spleen.
And how we did enjoy the sport !
And echo every faint report,
And answer every candid doubt,
And turn her motives inside out,
And holes in all her virtues pick,
Till we were sated, almost sick.

—Thus having brought it to a close,
In great good-humour, we arose.
Indeed, 'twas more than time to go,
Our boy had been an hour below.

So, warmly pressing Mrs. G.
To fix a day to come to tea,
We muffled up in cloke and plaid,
And trotted home behind the lad.

ACCOMPLISHMENT.

How is it that masters, and science, and art,
One spark of intelligence fail to impart,
Unless in that chemical union combin'd,
Of which the result, in one word, is a *mind* ?

A youth may have studied, and travelled abroad,
May sing like *Apollo*, and paint like a *Claude*,
And speak all the languages under the pole,
And have every gift in the world, but a soul.

That drapery wrought by the leisurely fair,
Call'd *patchwork*, may well to such genius compare ;
Wherein every tint of the rainbow appears,
And stars to adorn it are forc'd from their spheres.

There glows a bright pattern (a sprig or a spot)
'Twixt clusters of roses full-blown and red hot ;
Here magnified tulips divided in three,
Alternately shaded with sections of tree.

But when all is finish'd, this labour of years,
A mass unharmonious, unmeaning appears ;
'Tis showy, but void of intelligent grace ;
It is not a landscape, it is not a face.

'Tis thus Education (so call'd in our schools)
With costly materials, and capital tools,
Sits down to her work, if you duly reward her,
And sends it home finish'd according to order.

See French and Italian spread out on her lap;
Then Dancing springs up, and skips into a gap;
Next Drawing and all its varieties come,
Sew'd down in their place by her finger and thumb.

And then, for completing her fanciful robes,
Geography, Music, the use of the Globes,
&c. &c. which, match as they will,
Are sewn into shape, and set down in the bill.

Thus Science distorted, and torn into bits,
Art tortur'd, and frighten'd half out of her wits,
In portions and patches, some light and some shady,
Are stitch'd up together, and make a young lady.

A PAIR.

THERE was a youth—but woe is me!
I quite forgot his name, and he
Without some label round his neck,
Is like one pea among a peck.
Go search the country up and down,
Port, city, village, parish, town,
And, saving just the face and name,
You shall behold the very same
Wherever pleasure's train resorts,
From the Land's End to *Johnny Groats'*;

And thousands such have swell'd the herd,
From *William*, down to *George* the Third.

To life he started—thanks to fate,
In contact with a good estate :
Provided thus, and quite at ease,
He takes for granted all he sees ;
Ne'er sends a thought, nor lifts an eye,
To ask what am I ? where ? and why ?—
All that is no affair of his,
Somehow he came—and there he is !
Without such philosophic stuff,
Alive and well, and that's enough.

Thoughts ! why, if all that crawl like trains
Of caterpillars through his brains,
With every syllable let fall,
Bon mot, and compliment, and all,
Were melted down in furnace fire,
I doubt if shred of golden wire,
To make, amongst it all would linger,
A ring for *Tom Thumb's* little finger.
Yet, think not that he comes below
The modern, average ratio—
The current coin of fashion's mint—
The common, ball-room-going stint.
Of trifling cost his stock in trade is,
Whose business is to please the ladies ;
Or who to honours may aspire
Of a town beau or country squire.
The cant of fashion and of vice
To learn, slight effort will suffice ;

And he was furnish'd with that knowledge,
Even *before* he went to college.
And thus, without the toil of thought,
Favour and flattery may be bought.
No need to win the laurel, now,
For lady's smile or vassal's bow;
To lie exposed in patriot camp,
Or study by the midnight lamp.

Nature and art might vainly strive
To keep his intellect alive.
—'Twould not have forc'd an exclamation
Worthy a note of admiration,
If he had been on Gibeon's hill,
And seen the sun and moon stand still.
What prodigy was ever known
To raise the pitch of fashion's tone!
Or make it yield, by any chance,
That studied air of *nonchalance*,
Which after all, however grac'd,
Is apathy, and want of taste.

The *vulgar* every station fill,
St. Giles' or *James's*—which you will;
Spruce drapers in their masters shops,
Rank with right honourable fops;
No real distinction marks the kinds—
The *raw material* of their minds.
But *mind* claims rank that cannot yield
To blazon'd arms and crested shield:
Above the need and reach it stands
Of diamond stars from royal hands;

Nor waits the nod of courtly state,
To bid it be, or not be great.
The regions where it wings its way
Are set with brighter stars than they :
With calm contempt it thence looks down
On fortune's favour or its frown ;
Looks down on those who vainly try,
By strange inversion of the eye,
From that poor mole-hill where they sit,
To cast a downward look on it :
As robin, from his pear-tree height,
Looks *down* upon the eagle's flight.

Before our youth had learnt his letters,
They taught him to despise his betters ;
And if *some* things have been forgot,
That lesson certainly has not.
The haunts his genius chiefly graces,
Are tables, stables, taverns, races ;—
The things of which he most afraid is,
Are tradesmen's bills, and learned ladies :
He deems the first a grievous bore,
But loathes the latter even more
Than solitude or rainy weather,
Unless they happen both together.

Soft his existence rolls away,
To-morrow plenteous as to-day :
He lives, enjoys, and lives anew,—
And when he dies,—what shall we do !

Down a close street, whose darksome shops display
Old clothes and iron on both sides the way ;

Loathsome and wretched, whence the eye in pain,
Averted turns, nor seeks to view again ;
Where lowest dregs of human nature dwell,
More loathsome than the rags and rust they sell ;—
A pale mechanic rents an attic floor,
By many a shatter'd stair you gain the door :
'Tis one poor room, whose blacken'd walls are hung
With dust that settled there when he was young.
The rusty grate two massy bricks displays,
To fill the sides and make a frugal blaze.
The door unhing'd, the window patch'd and broke,
The panes obscur'd by half a century's smoke :
There stands the bench at which his life is spent,
Worn, groov'd, and bor'd, and worm-devour'd, and bent,
Where daily, undisturb'd by foes or friends,
In one unvaried attitude he bends.
His tools, long practis'd, seem to understand
Scarce less their functions, than his own right hand.
With these he drives his craft with patient skill ;
Year after year would find him at it still :
The noisy world around is changing all,
War follows peace, and kingdoms rise and fall ;
France rages now, and Spain, and now the Turk ;
Now victory sounds ;—but there he sits at work !
A man might see him so, then bid adieu,—
Make a long voyage to China or Peru ;
There traffic, settle, build ; at length might come,
Alter'd, and old, and weather-beaten home,
And find him on the same square foot of floor
On which he left him twenty years before.
—The self same bench, and attitude, and stool,
The same quick movement of his cunning tool;

The very distance 'twixt his knees and chin,
As though he had but stepp'd just out and in.

Such is his fate—and yet you might descry
A latent spark of meaning in his eye.
—That crowded shelf, beside his bench, contains
One old, worn, volume that employs his brains:
With algebraic lore its page is spread,
Where *a* and *b* contend with *x* and *z*:
Sold by some *student* from an Oxford hall,
—Bought by the pound upon a broker's stall.
On this it is his sole delight to pore,
Early and late, when working time is o'er:
But oft he stops, bewilder'd and perplex'd,
At some hard problem in the learned text;
Pressing his hand upon his puzzled brain,
At what the dullest school-boy could explain.

From needful sleep the precious hour he saves,
To give his thirsty mind the stream it craves:
There, with his slender rush beside him plac'd,
He drinks the knowledge in with greedy haste.
At early morning, when the frosty air
Brightens Orion and the northern Bear,
His distant window mid the dusky row,
Holds a dim light to passenger below.
—A light more dim is flashing on his mind,
That shows its darkness, and its views confin'd.
Had science shone around his early days,
How had his soul expanded in the blaze!
But penury bound him, and his mind in vain
Struggles and writhes beneath her iron chain.

—At length the taper fades, and distant cry
Of early sweep bespeaks the morning nigh ;
Slowly it breaks,—and that rejoicing ray
That wakes the healthful country into day,
Tips the green hills, slants o'er the level plain,
Reddens the pool, and stream, and cottage pane,
And field, and garden, park, and stately hall,—
Now darts obliquely on his wretched wall.
He knows the wonted signal ; shuts his book,
Slowly consigns it to its dusty nook ;
Looks out awhile, with fixt and absent stare,
On crowded roofs, seen through the foggy air ;
Stirs up the embers, takes his sickly draught,
Sighs at his fortunes, and resumes his craft.

COMPETITION.

(From " The World in the House ".)

The rage for competition, show, and style,
Is London's plague, and spreads for many a mile.
No rank, nor age, escapes that vulgar sin,
Breath'd in its nurseries,—in its schools work'd in :
And thus the mania, in maturer years,
In every form of pride and pomp appears,
As each were striving for a near approach—
Climax of grandeur !—to the lord mayor's coach.
—How short the triumph, many a prison cell,
And many a pining family could tell.—
The bridal equipage, in half a year
Brought to the hammer of the auctioneer,
Suffices not to liquidate the debt,
And fame's last bugle sounds in the *Gazette*.

Regions of intellect! serenely fair,
Hence let us rise, and breathe your purer air.
—There shine the stars! one intellectual glance
At that bright host,—on yon sublime expanse,
Might prove a cure;—well, say they, let them shine
With all our hearts,—but let *us* dress and dine.

THE MIND'S SANITY.

(From "The World in the Heart".)

And yet, amid the hurry, toil, and strife,
The claims, the urgencies, the whirl of life,—
The soul—perhaps in silence of the night—
Has flashes, transient intervals of light;
When things to come without a shade of doubt,
In terrible reality stand out.
Those lucid moments suddenly present
A glance of truth, as though the Heavens were rent;
And through that chasm of pure celestial light
The future breaks upon the startled sight:
Life's vain pursuits, and Time's advancing pace,
Appear with death-bed clearness, face to face;
And Immortality's expanse sublime,
In just proportion to the speck of time:
While Death, uprising from the silent shades,
Shows his dark outline ere the vision fades;
In strong relief against the blazing sky,
Appears the shadow as it passes by.
And though o'erwhelming to the dazzled brain,
These are the moments when the mind is sane.

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF Q. Q.

HOW IT STRIKES A STRANGER.

In a remote period of antiquity, when the supernatural and the marvellous obtained a readier credence than now, it was fabled that a stranger of extraordinary appearance was observed pacing the streets of one of the magnificent cities of the east, remarking with an eye of intelligent curiosity every surrounding object. Several individuals gathering around him, questioned him concerning his country and his business; but they presently perceived that he was unacquainted with their language, and he soon discovered himself to be equally ignorant of the most common usages of society. At the same time, the dignity and intelligence of his air and demeanour forbade the idea of his being either a barbarian or a lunatic. When at length he understood by their signs that they wished to be informed whence he came, he pointed with great significance to the sky; upon which the crowd concluding him to be one of their deities, were proceeding to pay him divine honours: but he no sooner comprehended their design than he rejected it with horror; and bending his knees and raising his hands towards heaven in the attitude of prayer, gave them to understand that he also was a worshipper of the powers above.

After a time, it is said, that the mysterious stranger accepted the hospitalities of one of the nobles of the city;

under whose roof he applied himself with great diligence to the acquirement of the language, in which he made such surprising proficiency, that in a few days he was able to hold intelligent intercourse with those around him. The noble host now resolved to take an early opportunity of satisfying his curiosity respecting the country and quality of his guest; and upon his expressing this desire, the stranger assured him that he would answer his inquiries that evening after sun-set. Accordingly, as night approached, he led him forth upon the balconies of the palace, which overlooked the wealthy and populous city. Innumerable lights from its busy streets and splendid palaces were now reflected in the dark bosom of its noble river; where stately vessels laden with rich merchandize from all parts of the known world, lay anchored in the port. This was a city in which the voice of the harp and of the viol, and the sound of the millstone were continually heard: and craftsmen of all kinds of craft were there; and the light of a candle was seen in every dwelling; and the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride were heard there. The stranger mused awhile upon the glittering scene, and listened to the confused murmur of mingling sounds. Then suddenly raising his eyes to the starry firmament, he fixed them with an expressive gaze, on the beautiful evening star which was just sinking behind a dark grove that surrounded one of the principal temples of the city. "Marvel not," said he to his host, "that I am wont to gaze with fond affection on yonder silvery star. That was my home; yes, I was lately an inhabitant of that tranquil planet; from whence a vain curiosity has tempted me to wander. Often had I beheld with

wondering admiration, this brilliant world of yours, ever one of the brightest gems of our firmament: and the ardent desire I had long felt to know something of its condition, was at length unexpectedly gratified. I received permission and power from above to traverse the mighty void, and to direct my course to this distant sphere. To that permission, however, one condition was annexed, to which my eagerness for the enterprise induced me hastily to consent; namely, that I must thenceforth remain an inhabitant of this strange earth, and undergo all the vicissitudes to which its natives are subject. Tell me therefore, I pray you, what is the lot of man; and explain to me more fully than I yet understand, all that I hear and see around me."

"Truly, Sir," replied the astonished noble, "although I am altogether unacquainted with the manners and customs, products and privileges of your country, yet methinks I cannot but congratulate you on your arrival in our world; especially since it has been your good fortune to alight on a part of it affording such various sources of enjoyment as this our opulent and luxurious city. And be assured it will be my pride and pleasure to introduce you to all that is most worthy the attention of such a distinguished foreigner."

Our adventurer, accordingly, was presently initiated in those arts of luxury and pleasure which were there well understood. He was introduced, by his obliging host, to their public games and festivals; to their theatrical diversions, and convivial assemblies: and in a short time he began to feel some relish for amusements, the meaning of which, at first, he could scarcely comprehend. The next lesson which it became desirable to

impart to him, was the necessity of acquiring wealth as the only means of obtaining pleasure. A fact which was no sooner understood by the stranger, than he gratefully accepted the offer of his friendly host to place him in a situation in which he might amass riches. To this object he began to apply himself with diligence; and was becoming in some measure reconciled to the manners and customs of our planet, strangely as they differed from those of his own, when an incident occurred which gave an entirely new direction to his energies.

It was but a few weeks after his arrival on our earth when walking in the cool of the day with his friend in the outskirts of the city, his attention was arrested by the appearance of a spacious enclosure near which they passed; he inquired the use to which it was appropriated.

"It is," replied the nobleman, "a place of public interment."

"I do not understand you," said the stranger.

"It is the place," repeated his friend, "where we bury our dead."

"Excuse me, Sir," replied his companion, with some embarrassment, "I must trouble you to explain yourself yet further."

The nobleman repeated the information in still plainer terms.

"I am still at a loss to comprehend you perfectly," said the stranger, turning deadly pale. "This must relate to something of which I was not only totally ignorant in my own world, but of which I have, as yet, had no intimation in yours. I pray you, therefore, to satisfy my curiosity; for if I have any clue to your

meaning, this, surely, is a matter of more mighty concernment than any to which you have hitherto directed me."

"My good friend," replied the nobleman, "you must be indeed a novice amongst us, if you have yet to learn that we must all, sooner or later, submit to take our place in these dismal abodes; nor will I deny that it is one of the least desirable of the circumstances which appertain to our condition; for which reason it is a matter rarely referred to in polished society, and this accounts for your being hitherto uninformed on the subject. But truly, Sir, if the inhabitants of the place whence you came are not liable to any similar misfortune, I advise you to betake yourself back again with all speed; for be assured there is no escape here; nor could I guarantee your safety for a single hour."

"Alas," replied the adventurer, "I must submit to the conditions of my enterprise; of which, till now, I little understood the import. But explain to me, I beseech you, something more of the nature and consequences of this wondrous metamorphosis, and tell me at what period it most commonly happens to man."

While he thus spoke, his voice faultered, and his whole frame shook violently; his countenance was pale as death, and a cold dew stood in large drops upon his forehead.

By this time his companion, finding the discourse becoming more serious than was agreeable, declared that he must refer him to the priests for further information; this subject being very much out of his province.

"How!" exclaimed the stranger, "then I cannot

have understood you;—do the priests only die?—are you not to die also?"

His friend evading these questions, hastily conducted his importunate companion to one of their magnificent temples, where he gladly consigned him to the instructions of the priesthood.

The emotion which the stranger had betrayed when he received the first idea of death, was yet slight in comparison with that which he experienced as soon as he gathered from the discourses of the priests, some notion of immortality; and of the alternative of happiness or misery in a future state. But this agony of mind was exchanged for transport when he learned, that by the performance of certain conditions before death, the state of happiness might be secured; his eagerness to learn the nature of these terms, excited the surprise and even the contempt of his sacred teachers. They advised him to remain satisfied for the present with the instructions he had received, and to defer the remainder of the discussion till the morrow.

"How!" exclaimed the novice, "say you not that death may come at any hour!—may it not then come this hour?—and what if it should come before I have performed these conditions! Oh! withhold not this excellent knowledge from me a single moment!"

The priests suppressing a smile at his simplicity, then proceeded to explain their Theology to their attentive auditor: but who shall describe the ecstacy of his happiness when he was given to understand, that the required conditions were, generally, of easy and pleasant performance; and that the occasional difficulties or inconveniences which might attend them, would entirely

cease with the short term of his earthly existence. "If then, I understand you rightly," said he to his instructors, "this event which you call death, and which seems in itself strangely terrible, is most desirable and blissful. What a favour is this which is granted to me, in being sent to inhabit a planet in which I can die!" The priests again exchanged smiles with each other; but their ridicule was wholly lost upon the enraptured stranger.

When the first transports of his emotion had subsided, he began to reflect with sore uneasiness on the time he had already lost since his arrival.

"Alas, what have I been doing!" exclaimed he. "This gold which I have been collecting, tell me, reverend priests, will it avail me any thing when the thirty or forty years are expired which, you say, I may possibly sojourn in your planet!"

"Nay," replied the priests, "but verily you will find it of excellent use so long as you remain in it."

"A very little of it shall suffice me," replied he: "for consider, how soon this period will be past: what avails it what my condition may be for so short a season; I will betake myself from this hour, to the grand concerns of which you have charitably informed me."

Accordingly from that period, continues the legend, the stranger devoted himself to the performance of those conditions, on which, he was told, his future welfare depended; but in so doing, he had an opposition to encounter wholly unexpected, and for which he was even at a loss to account. By thus devoting his chief attention to his chief interests, he excited the surprise, the contempt, and even the enmity of most of the inhabitants of the city; and they rarely mentioned him but with

a term of reproach, which has been variously rendered in all the modern languages.

Nothing could equal the stranger's surprise at this circumstance; as well as that of his fellow-citizens appearing, generally, so extremely indifferent as they did to their own interests. That they should have so little prudence and forethought as to provide only for their necessities and pleasures for that short part of their existence in which they were to remain in this planet, he could consider only as the effect of disordered intellect; so that he even returned their incivilities to himself, with affectionate expostulation; accompanied by lively emotions of compassion and amazement.

If ever he was tempted for a moment to violate any of the conditions of his future happiness, he bewailed his own madness with agonizing emotions: and to all the invitations he received from others to do any thing inconsistent with his real interests, he had but one answer—"Oh," he would say, "I am to die!—I am to die!"

A DAY'S PLEASURE.

One fine May morning a large party of young people, of which I was one, set off for the purpose of viewing a nobleman's seat at some miles distance. This was an excursion to which we had for some time been looking forward with much pleasure. It had been long promised us, and the day fixed more than once; but the weather, or some other untoward circumstance, had hitherto disappointed us. But now every obstacle was removed—the party assembled, and when, after many presages of bad weather, with which some of the least sanguine and

more experienced of our number had alarmed us the night before ;—when, after all these forebodings, the carriages drew up, and we found ourselves safely seated and driving off, there was not an eye that did not sparkle with pleasure.

The morning was bright and promising. Who does not know—who, at least, does not *remember*, how unusually blue and bright the sky appears on a holiday morning ? The fields were yet sparkling with dew-drops. Some early husbandmen going forth to their work, saluted us as we passed. The lark sang merrily over our heads. There was not a cloud—no, not one, to be seen from east to west : O, it was a lovely morning ! We were in open carriages ; which was the more agreeable as the first part of our road, especially, lay through a most delightful country, richly cultivated, and now all covered with the verdure of spring. We were, as may be imagined, in the highest spirits, and laughed we knew not why. When the first glow of happiness, occasioned by setting off, had subsided, we began to expatiate on the expected pleasures of the day. The place of our destination was one of the finest seats for many miles round. We had heard it talked of very often ; but none of us young ones had yet seen it. Most of the beauties and curiosities had been described to us, and on these our imaginations fixed with delighted anticipation ;—The grotto ; the hot-houses, with their rare collection of foreign plants ; the picture-gallery ; and, above all, the curious old tapestry hangings, which decorated one of the apartments, and which were esteemed the greatest curiosity of the place. Then there was the fine Belvidere at the top of the hill, which commanded, we were told, a most extensive

prospect. You might from thence see five counties: and on a very clear day you might just distinguish Gloucester Cathedral. "Well, we could not have a clearer day than this," said we: "so we shall see five counties, and Gloucester Cathedral!" Thus we went chatting along.

But we had scarcely reached the third mile-stone, before our pleasure was greatly damped by the indisposition of one of our party. She had risen with a head-ach, but strove to conceal it: however, it became so much worse with the motion of the carriage that she was quite unable to proceed; so with great reluctance we were obliged to leave her at a friend's house, which stood by the road's side. This misfortune cast a gloom upon us during the greater part of the ride. She was one of the most lively and intelligent of our whole party: there was not one but could have been better spared. However, as we drew near the end of our journey our spirits revived, and our regret for the loss of our companion gradually subsided.

But now a new cause of uneasiness arose:—A few rather threatening clouds had for some time been gathering in the south-west, which the elder part of the company regarded with an anxious eye. We young ones, however, were persuaded they would soon pass off; and as they began to gather over head, we declared that we should prefer it being cloudy during the heat of the day. "Yes, it would be much pleasanter!" just as I said the word, I felt a large drop of rain upon my cheek, which was quickly followed by many more; and now the most sanguine of us took the alarm. When we were yet a mile from the place of our destination, a soaking shower

came on, to which, being without any shelter, we were completely exposed. Still we tried to laugh at our misfortunes: till, upon approaching the place, the rain fell with redoubled violence; and as we galloped up the avenue, it ran streaming off in spouts and torrents from our hats and parasols. We had, therefore, little inclination to look about us: the first thing, as soon as we arrived, was to beg the charity of the servants; and we were completely occupied, for a full hour, in drying our clothes, and refitting, before a large fire in the housekeeper's parlour. By the time this was done, and we had partaken of some refreshments, we began to make ourselves so merry with the adventure, that some of us thought we gained as much in fun as we lost in sunshine.

It still rained: so giving up all thoughts of an excursion without, for the present, we proceeded to view the apartments. They were splendid indeed, and we were delighted: for my own part, the only thing that prevented my being quite as much so as I expected, was, that my exposure to the rain had brought on a slight tooth-ach; it was not violent, but yet just enough to take off the edge of my enjoyment. I went about holding a handkerchief to my face; and when any of my companions pointed me to any thing remarkable, I could only nod assent, and smile somewhat pitiously. Upon inquiring for the tapestry hangings, we were informed that they were always taken down when the family was absent; they had been removed only the day before.

The continuance of the rain, while it prevented our expected ramble about the grounds, yet afforded us an opportunity of examining more at leisure the curiosities

within; with this consideration we consoled ourselves. When we had viewed every apartment, and fully satisfied our curiosity, we were joined in the picture-gallery by the old house-steward, a venerable man, who, as he told us, had served the family for upwards of fifty years. He presently began recounting to us some of the family history, and many amusing anecdotes, pointing with his staff to the portraits of those to whom they related.—"This," said he, "is poor Lady Susan, who died when she was only seventeen; and there is old Sir James, taken when he was a child, playing with his favourite spaniel: he was the present Earl's great grandfather." We were much amused with this antiquated man and his stories; and agreed it compensated to us for not seeing the tapestry.

It was now growing late in the afternoon: we had given up all hope of reaching the Belvidere, and viewing the gardens; and were still lingering about the picture-room, when suddenly a bright golden beam of sunshine broke into the apartment; it streamed down the long gallery, and lighted up the pale faces and faded draperies of the old brown portraits, from one end to the other. An exclamation of joy burst at the same instant from the whole party. We hastened to the windows: already a broad line of bright sky appeared along the horizon; the clouds were dispersing in all directions; the rain had nearly ceased; and the heavy clouds that were rolling off on the opposite side exhibited a brilliant rainbow. By the time we were equipped for our ramble, all was clear over-head; it was a beautiful evening. The grass was wet to the foot, and the trees were yet dropping with rain; but all was fresh, green and sparkling. Once

again our spirits revived : it was not, indeed, the lively, bounding joy with which we set off in the morning, but a more serene and chastened feeling.

We now visited the grotto, the gardens, and hot-houses ; it was but a hasty inspection, as the ground was so wet that we were fearful of lingering ; we were anxious, too, to reach the Belvidere before sun-set. At length, with wet shoes and weary steps, we climbed the hill. The exhalations which were now rising in consequence of the heavy rain, in a great degree obscured the prospect, but at the same time added to its brilliancy ; for, being illumined by the setting sun, the whole wide expanse of country which the height commanded, was, as it were, one flood of golden mist. The five counties we had thought so much of, were not indeed so distinctly discernible as we had seen them on the map ; however, our attendant pointed to each, and we believed that there they were. As for the Cathedral, we were obliged to take it for granted that it lay in the direction of the guide's walking stick. We waited a few minutes to see the sun set behind the distant hills : it was a splendid scene ; and, as he assured us, was almost as fine a sight as the Cathedral.

We now descended the hill, very well satisfied ; and, being by this time considerably fatigued, were not sorry to find ourselves re-seated in the carriages, and on our way home. The evening continued fine but chilly ; and the latter part of the way it was very dark. At first we talked over our adventures ; but some of the party soon dropped to sleep, and conversation flagged with the rest. We were weary, and our heads ached. I question

if any thing we had seen during the whole day afforded us more real pleasure than the sight of the cheerful lights in our own house, as we approached it. We were certainly pleased with our excursion, notwithstanding its misfortunes; and yet I believe, had it been proposed to us to set off on a similar expedition the next day, we should none of us have been disposed to comply. The friend we left ill by the way, we found quite restored. She had spent the day at home very happily; and when she heard of our misfortunes, was glad she had escaped them. We were all thankful to retire to rest that night. The next morning at breakfast, at grand-papa's request, I related the adventures of the day.

LUCY'S WISHES.

Lucy had been standing one afternoon for nearly an hour at the parlour window, watching the carriages and passengers in the street. Idleness ever begets discontent: but instead of laying the blame upon herself, she felt disposed to complain of her condition. Almost every stranger that passed, she concluded was in happier circumstances than herself. She observed stages and carriages of various kinds, driving up to the great inn on the other side of the way. She watched the passengers as they alighted and set off again; wondered who they were, whence they came, whither they were going, and envied them because they were not staying at home. A travelling chaise, with ladies in pretty riding dresses, stopped to change horses. Ah, thought she, how happy they are! going some delightful journey—hundreds of

miles perhaps, and to see thousands of curiosities : or to live at some elegant country seat : at any rate they are not staying at home like me. How long have I been confined to this dull town, and this one house ! She then cast a forlorn glance around the room, every object of which had been familiar to her from her infancy. Then looking over to her opposite neighbours, she saw a blazing fire, and the family seated round it. How comfortable they are ! thought she ; so cheerful, so sociable : telling some interesting story, perhaps ; not all alone in a dull room like me !

When it grew too dark to see distinctly what was passing in the street, Lucy slowly moved from the window, and seated herself by the fire ; where, fixing her eyes upon the red cinders, she fell into a deep reverie ; and began to consider what situation she would choose for herself, if she might but change her condition. Her imagination still followed the travelling party she had seen stop at the inn ; and she first thought she should like to be a companion to those ladies ; to read to them, walk with them, and attend them wherever they went. " But how foolish ! " thought she ; " while I am wishing, why not wish myself one of the ladies themselves ?—Yes, yes, a rich heiress, very handsome, fortune at my own disposal ; a thousand a year—no, five ;—or suppose ten thousand a year. Should my father and mother be alive ?—perhaps they would not allow me to travel and do as I pleased ;—so they should have been dead some years, and I would have a very agreeable young person for a companion. But poor papa and mamma ! " thought Lucy, " no no, they should not be dead then ; but still I should have the fortune in my own hands,

and do just what I pleased with it. And I would be an only child, and not have any brothers or sisters to teaze me." She next proceeded to settle the number of her servants, the colour of her carriages and liveries; in what counties she would have her country seats, and in what square her town house: till the number of her wants, and the splendour of her establishments, increased so surprisingly, that she began to fear her means would be insufficient, and she found it expedient at once to increase her income from ten to twenty thousand a year.

Just as Lucy had arrived at this conclusion, her mother entered the room, and put a stop to her meditations. She was beginning to converse with her daughter about the book they had been reading together in the morning: but Lucy, finding that subject very dry in comparison with her late brilliant speculations, soon interrupted it, by relating as much as she thought proper of what had been just passing in her mind. Her mother, when she had finished, endeavoured to prove that she would probably not be at all happier for such a change of circumstances. Lucy knew not what to say to her representations; yet she did not feel convinced, and said, "Well, then, mamma, if wishing were of any use, and if you were exactly in my place, what would *you* wish for?—What is the happiest situation in all the world that you can think of?"

"If wishing were of any use then," said her mother, "I might, in the first place, wish to be about that age, when the dangers of infancy and the follies of childhood are past; but when the opportunities and advantages of youth are yet to come. I would not wish to be grown

up, because then the character is fixed; and I should lose the unspeakable advantage of having it yet in my power to form a good one. I might also wish for a sound, vigorous constitution. With regard to personal beauty, as there are some disadvantages connected with it, and as many who do not possess it make greater proficiency in the things most important to happiness than those who do, I would not wish about it; but make up my mind to be contented with whatever external appearance I happened to have. I should certainly wish to have kind parents; not such as would indulge my follies and spoil my temper; but parents able and willing to train me up in the way I should go, to impart useful instruction, and correct my perverse dispositions. I would also wish for brothers and sisters, some of them nearly of my own age; as it would not only render my life more social and cheerful, but give me an opportunity of cultivating amiable and generous feelings, instead of growing selfish and self-important, as is sometimes the case with an only child. I might further wish my parents to be in easy circumstances, such as would allow them to give me a good, useful education, to supply my common wants, and to afford me a few rational pleasures: but I would by no means wish to be very rich, nor in the highest ranks of society, because it is universally allowed by men of the greatest wisdom and experience, that persons in the middle ranks of life are the most advantageously circumstanced for the attainment of virtue and happiness. Nor would I by any means wish for a fortune in my own hands till I was well qualified to manage it: for there cannot be a greater misfortune than for a person to be left to their own guidance at the early age we are

supposing. I would only wish, therefore, for a moderate allowance from my parents, such as would enable me to indulge a few reasonable wishes, and that I might have a mite of my *own* to give to the poor, and to contribute towards some of the institutions for doing good to my fellow creatures. In addition to all this, I might, if it were worth while, wish to live in an agreeable neighbourhood, where there were a few young people of my own age and rank, with whom I might occasionally associate. I might also desire to live in a pleasant convenient house, with a garden ; perhaps I might wish my parents to allow me a little garden of my own, to cultivate at my leisure hours ; and that my own room should be furnished with a suitable library, and other means of instruction and amusement ; and I would have regular hours for business and recreation."

" O how de'ightful ! " exclaimed Lucy ; " I can fancy exactly what kind of a house and garden it is, and what kind of people they are. I think you are a very good wisher indeed : now that is exactly what I should like."

" Indeed ! " said her mother ; " and who do you think is the fortunate young person I have been thinking of all the time, with whom you would so much like to change places ? "

Lucy thought for a moment, and then exclaimed, " O mamma ! you have been playing me a trick. You have been thinking of me, I do believe ! Yes, for I am just the age that you said ; and I have kind parents to instruct me, and they are not very rich ; and I have brothers and sisters of my own age to associate with, and a few young friends besides ; and I have an allowance to do what I please with ; and I am not very handsome ;

and I live in a convenient house, tolerably pleasant, with a garden, and have a garden and room of my own, and books and globes :—dear, how foolish I was not to find it out at first! Well, but how is it then that I am not as happy as I thought I should be with all those things? Why was I so dull and uncomfortable this afternoon, that I thought every body better off than myself?"

"I'll tell you the reason, my dear," replied her mother; "we have still left something out. The situation I have described, and in which precisely you yourself are placed, is certainly, as far as outward things can go, one of the happiest in the world; and in such a world as this, a change for you would almost certainly be for the worse; but then we must remember, that no situation, no possible combination of circumstances, can make us perfectly happy in this world, because it is a sinful world. When we fancy others better off than ourselves, it is only because we know our own circumstances, but do not know theirs. Those ladies whom you imagined to be so happy only because they were travelling, and wore pretty riding dresses, have, very probably, some outward trial, or some secret uneasiness, which makes them less so than you. But besides this, there are, as I said, some things which we have forgotten to include in our list of desirables: and they possess this great advantage above all the rest, that if we wish for them aright, wishing will not be in vain. I would therefore, in addition to all we have mentioned, wish for an amiable, obliging disposition; a cheerful, open temper; a peaceable and contented spirit. I would wish also, for industry and activity, which are the best securities against

languor and discontent; and without which, no circumstances can make us happy. Above all, I would desire a good conscience, and a heart right towards God. These are things, my dear Lucy, which, if we wish for, not feebly and lazily, but seriously and earnestly, may certainly be obtained.—With these, in any circumstances, we shall be happy; and without them, we should not be contented, even with twenty thousand a year!"

THE LIFE OF A LOOKING-GLASS.

To the Editor of the Youth's Magazine.

SIR,

It being very much the custom, as I am informed, even for obscure individuals to furnish some account of themselves, for the edification of the public, I hope I shall not be deemed impertinent for calling your attention to a few particulars of my own history. I cannot, indeed, boast of any very extraordinary incidents; but having, during the course of a long life, had much leisure and opportunity for observation, and being naturally of a *reflecting* cast, I thought it might be in my power to offer some remarks that may not be wholly unprofitable to your readers.

My earliest recollection is that of a carver and gilder's workshop; where I remained for many months, leaning with my face to the wall; and having never known any livelier scene, I was very well contented with my quiet condition. The first object that I remember to have arrested my attention, was, what I now believe must have been a large spider, which, after a vast deal of scampering about, began, very deliberately, to weave

a curious web all over my face. This afforded me great amusement: and not then knowing when far lovelier objects were destined to my gaze, I did not resent the indignity.

At length, when little dreaming of any change of fortune, I felt myself suddenly removed from my station; and immediately afterwards underwent a curious operation, which at the time gave me considerable apprehensions for my safety: but these were succeeded by pleasure, upon finding myself arrayed in a broad, black frame, handsomely carved and gilt; for you will please to observe, that the period of which I am now speaking was upwards of fourscore years ago. This process being finished, I was presently placed, very carefully, in a large packing-case, and sent a long journey, by waggon, to London. That I may not be tedious, I will not here stay to relate the surprise and terror I endured during this transportation; nor the serious apprehensions I entertained that my delicate frame would never survive the jolts and jars it underwent in the course of it. Indeed, I have reason to believe that I was in imminent danger many times; not to mention the extreme darkness and dreariness of my situation. How sincerely did I then wish to be replaced in my old quiet corner; which appeared cheerfulness itself, compared with my present forlorn condition. So little are we capable of judging what circumstances will eventually prove most conducive to our happiness! At last, after many, to me, unintelligible movements, I found to my great joy that my prison was being unbarred. The cheerful light once again shone upon me; and a person, whom I afterwards found to be my new master's apprentice, (and with whom I soon

became well acquainted,) lifted me carefully out. No sooner had he cleared away from my face the straw and paper with which I had been well nigh suffocated, than, as I observed, he gave me a very significant look; which, to confess the truth, I took, at the time, for a compliment to myself:—but I have since learnt to interpret such compliments more truly. Striking, indeed, was the contrast between my late mode of life and that to which I was now introduced. My new situation was in the shop window, with my face to the street: which was one of the most public in London. Here my attention was at first quite distracted by the constant succession of objects that passed before me. But it was not long before I began to remark the considerable degree of attention I myself excited; and how much I was distinguished, in this respect, from my neighbours, the other articles, in the shop-window. I observed that passengers, who appeared to be posting away upon urgent business, would often just turn and give me a friendly glance as they passed. But I was particularly gratified to observe, that while the old, the shabby, and the wretched, seldom took any notice of me, the young, the gay, and the handsome, generally paid me this compliment; and that these good-looking people always seemed the best pleased with me; which I attributed to their superior discernment. I well remember one young lady, who used to pass my master's shop regularly every morning in her way to school, and who never omitted to turn her head to look at me as she went by; so that, at last, we became well acquainted with each other. I must confess, that at this period of life, I was in great danger of becoming insufferably vain, from the attentions that were

then paid me ; and, perhaps, I am not the only individual to whom a sudden removal from retirement to a more public mode of life, has proved a hazardous and trying event to the character ; nor the only one who has formed mistaken notions as to the attentions they receive in society.

My vanity, however, received a considerable check from one circumstance ; nearly all the goods by which I was surrounded in the shop window, though many of them much more homely in their structure, and humble in their destinations, were disposed of sooner than myself. I had the mortification of seeing one after another bargained for and sent away, while I remained, month after month, without a purchaser. At last, however, a gentleman and lady from the country, who had been standing some time in the street, inspecting, and, as I perceived, conversing about me, walked into the shop ; and after some altercation with my master, agreed to purchase me : upon which I was once more packed up, and sent off on a longer journey than before. I was far less disconcerted, this time, by my unpleasant circumstances, than during my first journey ; concluding they would terminate, as before, in a change for the better.—Another proof of our incompetence to judge of the real tendency of passing events. I was very curious, you may suppose, upon arriving at my new quarters, to see what kind of life I was likely to lead. I remained, however, sometime unmolested in my packing case, and very *flat* I felt there. Upon being, at last, unpacked, I found myself in the stone hall of a large, lone house in the country. My master and mistress, I soon learned, were new-married people, just setting up house-keeping ;

and I was intended to decorate their best parlour; to which I was presently conveyed; and after some little discussion between them in fixing my longitude and latitude, I was hung up opposite the fire-place, in an angle of ten degrees from the wall, according to the fashion of those times. I felt, at first, very well pleased with my new situation: and looked with complacency upon the various objects before me, which, like myself, were then new and handsome: but perhaps I should have experienced some dismay, if I could have known that I was destined to spend *fifty* years in that spot without undergoing any change myself, or witnessing any in the things that surrounded me, except, indeed, that imperceptibly produced by time.

Yes, there I hung, year after year, almost in perpetual solitude. My master and mistress were sober, regular, old-fashioned people; they saw no company except at fair time and Christmas day; on which occasions only, they occupied the best parlour. My countenance used to brighten up, when I saw the annual fire kindled in that ample grate; and when a cheerful circle of country cousins assembled round it. At those times, I always got a little notice from the young folks: but those festivities over, and I was condemned to another half year of complete loneliness. How familiar to my recollection at this hour, is that large, old-fashioned parlour! I can remember, as well as if I had seen them but yesterday, the noble flowers on the crimson-damask chair-covers and window-curtains; and those curiously carved tables and chairs. I could describe every one of the stories on the Dutch tiles that surrounded the grate; the rich china ornaments on the wide mantel-piece;

and the pattern of the paper-hangings, which consisted alternately of a parrot, a poppy, and a shepherdess—a parrot, a poppy, and a shepherdess. The room being so little used, the window-shutters were rarely opened, but there were three holes cut in each, in the shape of a heart, through which, day after day, and year after year, I used to watch the long, dim, dusty sun beams, streaming across the dark parlour. I should mention, however, that I seldom missed a short visit from my master and mistress on a Sunday morning, when they came down stairs, ready dressed for church. I can remember how my mistress used to trot in upon her high-heeled shoes, unfold a leaf of one of the shutters, then come and stand straight before me; then turn half round to the right and left; never failing to see if the corner of her well-starched handkerchief was pinned exactly in the middle. I think I can see her now, in her favourite dove-coloured lustring, (which she wore every Sunday in every summer for seven years at the least,) and her long full ruffles, and worked apron. Then followed my good master; who, though his visit was somewhat shorter, never failed to come and settle his Sunday wig before me.

Time rolled away: and my master and mistress, with all that appertained to them insensibly suffered from its influence. When I first knew them, they were a young, blooming couple as you would wish to see: but I gradually perceived an alteration. My mistress began to stoop a little; and my master got a cough, which troubled him, more or less, to the end of his days. At first, and for many years, my mistress's foot upon the stairs was light and nimble; and she would come in as

blythe and as brisk as a lark: but at last, it was a slow, heavy step; and even my master's began to totter. And, in these respects, every thing else kept pace with them: the crimson damask that I remembered so fresh and bright, was now faded and worn: the dark polished mahogany was, in some places, worm eaten; the parrot's gay plumage on the walls grew dull; and I myself, though long unconscious of it, partook of the universal decay. The dissipated taste I acquired, upon my first introduction to society, had long since subsided; and the quiet sombre life I led, gave me a grave, meditative turn. The change which I witnessed in all things around me, caused me to reflect much on their vanity: and when, upon the occasions before mentioned, I used to see the gay, blooming faces of the young, saluting me with so much complacency, I would fain have admonished them of the alteration they must soon undergo; and have told them how certainly their bloom, also, must fade away as a flower. But, alas! you know, Sir, looking-glasses can only *reflect*.

After I had remained in this condition, to the best of my knowledge, about five and forty years, I suddenly missed my poor old master: he came to visit me no more; and by the change in my mistress's apparel, I guessed what had happened. Five years more passed away; and then I saw no more of her! In a short time after this, several rude strangers entered my room: the long, rusty screw, which had held me up so many years, was drawn out; and I together with all the goods and chattels in the house, was put up to auction, in that very apartment which I had so long peaceably occupied. I felt a good deal hurt at the very contemptuous terms

in which I was spoken of by some of the bidders; for, as I said, I was not aware that I had become as old fashioned as my poor old master and mistress. At last I was knocked down for a trifling sum, and sent away to a very different destination.

Before going home to my new residence, I was sent to a workman to be refitted in a new gilt frame: which, although it completely modernized my appearance, I must confess, at first, set very uneasily upon me. And now, although it was not till my old age, I for the first time became acquainted with my natural use, capacity, and importance. My new station was no other than the dressing room of a young lady, just come from school. Before I was well fixed in the destined spot, she came to survey me, and with a look of such complacency and good will, as I had not seen for many a day. I was now presently initiated in all the mysteries of the toilet; O, what an endless variety of laces, jewels, silks, and ribbons; pins, combs, cushions, and curling-irons: washes, essences, powders, and patches, were daily spread before me! If I had been heretofore almost tired with the sight of my good old mistress's everlasting lustring, I really felt still more so with this profusion of ornament and preparation. I was, indeed, favoured with my fair mistress's constant attentions: they were so unremitting as perfectly to astonish me, after being so long accustomed to comparative neglect. Never did she enter her room, on the most hasty errand, without just vouchsafing me a kind glance; and at leisure hours I was indulged with much longer visits. Indeed, to confess the truth, I was sometimes quite surprised at their length; but I don't mean to tell tales. During the

hour of dressing, when I was more professionally engaged with her, there was, I could perceive, nothing in the room—in the house—nay, I believe nothing in the world, of so much importance in her estimation as myself. But I have frequently remarked, with concern, the different aspect with which she would regard me at those times, and when she returned at night from the evening's engagements. However late it was, or however fatigued she might be, still I was sure of a greeting the moment she entered; but instead of the bright, blooming face I had seen a few hours before, it was generally pale and haggard, and not unfrequently bearing a strong expression of disappointment or chagrin.

My mistress would frequently bring a crowd of her young companions into her apartment: and it was amusing to see how they would each in turn come to pay their respects to me. What varied features and expressions in the course of a few minutes I had thus an opportunity of observing! upon which I used to make my own quiet reflections.

In this manner I continued some years in the service of my mistress, without any material alteration taking place either in her or in me: but, at length, I began to perceive that her aspect towards me was considerably changed, especially when I compared it with my first recollections of her. She now appeared to regard me with somewhat less complacency; and would frequently survey me with a mingled expression of displeasure and suspicion, as though some change had taken place in *me*, though I am sure it was no fault of mine; indeed, I could never reflect upon myself for a moment: with regard to my conduct towards any of my owners, I have

ever been a faithful servant; nor have I once, in the course of my whole life, given a false answer to any one I have had to do with. I am, by nature, equally averse to flattery and detraction; and this I may say for myself, that I am incapable of misrepresentation. It was with mingled sensations of contempt and compassion, that I witnessed the efforts my mistress now made in endeavouring to force me to yield the same satisfaction to her as I had done upon our first acquaintance. Perhaps, in my confidential situation, it would be scarcely honourable to disclose all I saw; suffice it then to hint, that to my candid temper, it was painful to be obliged to connive at that borrowed bloom, which, after all was a substitute for that of nature; time, too, greatly baffled even these expedients, and threatened to render them wholly ineffectual. Many a cross and reproachful look had I now to endure: which, however, I took patiently, being always remarkably smooth and even in my temper. Well remembering how sadly time had spoiled the face of my poor old mistress, I dreaded the consequences if my present owner should experience, by and by, as rough treatment from him; and I believe she dreaded it too; but these apprehensions were needless. Time is not seldom arrested in the midst of his occupations; and it was so in this instance. I was one day greatly shocked, by beholding my poor mistress stretched out in a remote part of the room, arrayed in very different ornaments to those I had been used to see her wear; she was so much altered that I scarcely knew her; but for this she could not now reproach me; I watched her thus for a few days, as she lay before me, as cold and motionless as myself: but she was soon

conveyed away; and I, shortly afterwards, was engaged in the service of another mistress.

My new station was, in some respects, very similar to my last; that is, I was again placed in a young lady's apartment, where I did not doubt but I should be called to witness the same appearances and operations as before: but in this I was mistaken. The first circumstance that made me suspect my new mistress differed from my late one, was, that when she first entered her chamber after my arrival, I observed that she remained there for a considerable time, and at last went out again without taking the least notice of me: this surprised me exceedingly. The first time I had a full view of her, was the next morning as soon as she arose, when she came and spent a very few minutes in my company, adjusting a neat morning dress, and combing out some pretty, simple ringlets upon her fair forehead. It was not such a fine formed face, as I remember my last mistress's was, when I first entered her service; but having, by this time, from the nature of my studies, acquired considerable skill in physiognomy, I confess it pleased me much better: and although I soon found I should meet with much less attention here, than I had lately been accustomed to, I was now too old, and knew too well how to estimate those attentions, to feel at all mortified at the neglect. The visits my new mistress paid me, were very regular; about thrice in the day she used to avail herself for a short time of my services; and while on these occasions I never remember to have received a cross or discontented look from her, so I never, on the other hand, witnessed that expression of secret satisfaction, or anxious in-

quiry, which I had often heretofore had occasion to remark.

My mistress spent much time alone in her chamber; but it was rarely indeed, that she took any notice of me, except at those times when I was really wanted. I have known her sit many a time, for two or three hours, working or reading at the table over which I hung, without once lifting up her head to look at me; though I could see her all the time. I have observed her light figure pass and repass twenty times before me, without her once glancing at me as she went by. Thus we lived together very good friends; neither of us making any unreasonable demands upon the other. Time, as usual, passed away: but I was particularly struck in observing the different effect of his operations on the countenance of my present possessor, and that of my last. There was, of course, in a few years some visible alteration; but although the bloom of youth began to fade, there was nothing less of sweetness, cheerfulness, and contentment in her expression. She retained the same placid smile, the same unclouded brow, the same mildness in her eye, (though it was somewhat less sparkling,) as when it first beamed upon me ten years before.

I saw here but few fine things and little variety; except such as the changing seasons, and a moderate attention to changing fashions occasioned: but then, I was never annoyed, as I had been in my last place, with that heterogeneous mixture of fragments of littered finery, with which the room and dressing table used to be scattered in all directions, after the grand operation was over; and which lay full in my view for hours, till my mistress's return at night, or more often till the next

morning. All here was neat and orderly; which to me was a very great accommodation; having acquired, in early life, from the orderly habits of my poor old mistress, such a love of neatness, that any thing untidy was particularly offensive to me. I became, as you may easily imagine, much attached to my present employer, and wished for nothing better than to pass the remainder of my days in her service; but herein I was disappointed.

One morning early, she appeared before me, surrounded by several fair attendants, and devoted to me a little more time and attention than was usual with her. I shall never forget the expression of her countenance, as she stood arrayed all in white, and gave me one more pensive look, which I little thought, at the time, would be the last I should ever receive from her; but so it was. There was a great bustle in the house that morning, (whatever was the reason,) and I saw my fair mistress no more!

Ever since, I have continued in quiet possession of her deserted chamber; which is only occasionally visited by other parts of the family; sometimes my dear mistress's favourite cat will steal in, as though in quest of her: leap up upon the table, purr, and sweep her long tail across my face; then catching a glimpse of me jump down again, and run out as though she was frightened. I feel that I am now getting old, and almost beyond further service. I have an ugly crack, occasioned by the careless stroke of a broom, all across my left corner; my coat is very much worn in several places: even my new frame is now tarnished and old fashioned; so that I cannot expect any new employment.

Having now, therefore, nothing to reflect on but

the past scenes of my life, I have amused myself with giving you this account of them. I said I had made physiognomy my study, and that I had acquired some skill in this interesting science. The result of my observations will, at least, be deemed impartial, when I say, that I am generally least pleased with the character of those faces, which appear the most so with mine. And I have seen occasion so far to alter the opinions of my inexperienced youth, that, for those who pass the least time with me, and treat me with little consideration, I conceive the highest esteem ; and their aspect generally produces the most pleasing *reflections*.

DIALOGUE BETWEEN LUCY AND HER MOTHER.

One day a lady and her daughter called upon Lucy's mother, and sat with her an hour or more, conversing on various subjects. Lucy's age was not such as to make it proper for her to take part in the conversation ; she sat sometimes listening to what passed, and sometimes making silent observations on the dress or manners of her mother's visitors. When they took leave, she began the following conversation.

Lucy. What a good thing it is that people cannot see one's thoughts !

Mother. It would be inconvenient, sometimes, if they could.

Lucy. O, worse than inconvenient ! to day, for instance, I would not have had Mrs. and Miss G. know what I was thinking of for all the world.

Mother. Indeed ! Pray may *I* know what it might be ?

Lucy. O yes, mamma, you may ; it was no real harm. I was only thinking what an odd, fat, disagreeable kind of looking woman Mrs. G. was ;—and what a tiresome way she had of telling long stories ; and that Miss G. was the vainest girl I ever saw ; I could see all the time, she was thinking of nothing but her beauty, and her—

Mother. Come, come, no more of this. I have heard quite enough.

Lucy. Well, Mamma, but only do suppose they could have known what I was thinking of !

Mother. Well, and what then do you suppose ?

Lucy. Why, in the first place, I dare say they would have thought me an impertinent, disagreeable little thing.

Mother. I dare say they would

Lucy. So what a good thing it is that people cannot see one's thoughts ! is it not ?

Mother. I rather think it does not make so much difference as you imagine.

Lucy. Dear me, I think it must make a great deal of difference.

Mother. Did not you say just now, that Miss G. was a vain girl, and that she thought a great deal of her beauty ?

Lucy. Yes, and so she does, I am certain.

Mother. Pray, my dear, who told you so ?

Lucy. Nobody : I found it out myself.

Mother. But how did you find it out, Lucy ?

Lucy. Why, mamma, I could see it, as plain as could be.

Mother. So then, if you could have looked into her heart, and had seen her think to herself—" What a

beauty I am !—I hope they admire me "—it would have made no alteration in your opinion of her.

LUCY. (*Laughing*) No, mamma ; only have confirmed me in what I thought before.

MOTHER. Then what advantage was it to her that you could not see her thoughts ?

LUCY. (*Hesitating*) Not much, to her, certainly—just then at least ;—not to such a vain looking girl as she is.

MOTHER. What do you suppose gives her that vain look ?

LUCY. Being so pretty, I suppose.

MOTHER. Nay, think again ; I have seen many faces as pretty as hers, that did not look at all vain.

LUCY. True, so have I ; then it must be from her thinking so much about her beauty.

MOTHER. Right. If Miss G. has a vain expression in her countenance (which for argument's sake we suppose) or whoever has such an expression, this must be the cause. Now we are come to the conclusion I expected, and I have proved my point.

LUCY. What point, mamma ?

MOTHER. That you greatly over-rate the advantage, or mistake the nature of it, of our thoughts being concealed from our fellow-creatures. Since it appears, that the thoughts—at least our *habits of thought*, so greatly influence the conduct, manners, and appearance, that our secret weaknesses are as effectually betrayed to all discerning eyes, as if our inmost feelings were actually visible.

LUCY. But surely there are some people so deep and artful, that nobody can possibly guess what passes in their minds ? Not that I should wish to be such an one.

Mother. They may, and do, indeed, often succeed in deceiving others in particular instances; but they cannot conceal their true characters; every one knows that they are deep and artful, and therefore their grand purpose is defeated; they are neither esteemed nor trusted.

Lucy. Well, but still mamma, to-day, for instance, do you really suppose that Mrs. and Miss G. had any idea of the opinion I formed of them?

Mother. Indeed, my dear, I dare say Mrs. and Miss G. did not take the trouble to think about you, or your opinions; but supposing they had chanced to observe you, I think, most likely, they would have formed an unfavourable idea.

Lucy. Why so, mamma?

Mother. Let us suppose that any other young girl of your own age had been present, and that while you were making your ill-natured observations on these ladies, your companion had been listening with sympathy and kindness to the account Mrs. G. was giving of her troubles and complaints; and wishing she could relieve or assist her. Do you not imagine that in this case, the tone of her voice, the expression of her countenance would have been more gentle and kind and agreeable than yours? And do not you think that these ladies, if they had taken the trouble, could have discerned the difference?

Lucy. I dare say they would have liked her the best.

Mother. Doubtless. But suppose instead of this being a single instance, as I would hope it is, suppose you were in the habit of making such impertinent observations, and of forming these uncharitable opinions of every body that came in your way?

Lucy. Then I should get a sharp satirical look, and every body would dislike me.

Mother. Yes, as certainly as if you thought aloud.

Lucy. Only that would be rather worse.

Mother. In some respects it would be rather better; there would, at least, be something honest in it; instead of that hateful and unsuccessful duplicity, which, while all uncharitableness is indulged within, renders the exterior all friendship and cordiality. And that is but a poor, mean, ungenerous kind of satisfaction at best, Lucy, which arises from the hope that others do not know how vain, how selfish, how censorious we are.

Lucy. Yes, I know that; but yet—

Mother. But yet, you mean to say, I suppose, that you cannot exactly think as I do about it: and the reason is, that you have not thought sufficiently upon the subject, nor observed enough of yourself and of others, to enter fully into my ideas. But when you are capable of making more accurate observations on what passes in your own mind, you will find, that our estimation of those around us is not so much formed upon their outward actions, nor their common conversation, as upon those slight, involuntary turns of countenance or of expression, which escape them unawares, which betray their inmost thoughts, and lay their hearts open to our view; and by which, in fact, we decide upon their characters, and regulate the measure of our esteem.

Lucy. Then what is one to do, mother?

Mother. Nothing can be plainer: there is but one way for us, Lucy, if we desire the esteem of others. Let our thoughts be always *fit to be seen:* let them be such as to impart to our countenance, our manners, our

conduct, that which is generous, candid, honest, and amiable.

Lucy. But that would be very difficult.

Mother. Not if it be attempted in the right way. It would be difficult, and indeed quite impossible, to restrain all foolish and evil thoughts with a direct view to be admired or approved by our fellow-creatures: but if we resolve to do so in the fear of God, from a recollection that He "searches and knows us, and understands our thoughts afar off," we shall find assistance and motive; and success will certainly follow. If, like David, we hate "vain thoughts," because God hates them, we shall not suffer them to "lodge within us;" but shall desire as the apostle did, "to bring every thought into subjection to the obedience of Christ." Thus, you see, the argument terminates where most of our discussions do; for whatever is amiss in us, there is but one remedy.

Let us entreat God to change our evil hearts; to make them pure and holy; to cleanse them from vanity, selfishness, and uncharitableness; and then all subordinate good consequences will follow. We shall enjoy the esteem and good-will of our fellow creatures, while ensuring that which is of infinitely greater consequence, the approbation of our own conscience, and of Him "whose favour is better than life."

A FABLE.

An idle weed that used to crawl
Unseen behind the garden wall,
(Its most becoming station ;)
At last—refreshed by sun and showers,
Which nourish weeds, as well as flowers—
Amused its solitary hours
With thoughts of elevation.

Those thoughts encouraged day by day,
It shot forth many an upward spray,
And many a tendril band ;
But as it could not climb alone,
It uttered oft a lazy groan
To moss and mortar, stick and stone,
To lend a helping hand.

At length, by friendly arms sustained,
The aspiring vegetable gained
The object of its labours :
That which had cost her many a sigh,
And nothing less would satisfy—
Which was not only being *high*,
But *higher* than her neighbours.

And now this weed, though weak, and spent
With climbing up the steep ascent,
Admired her figure tall :
And then (for vanity ne'er ends
With that which it at first intends)
Began to laugh at those poor friends
Who helped her up the wall.

But by and by, my lady spied
The garden on the other side :
And fallen was her crest,
To see, in neat array below,
A bed of all the flowers that blow—
Lily and rose—a goodly show,
In fairest colours drest.

Recovering from her first surprise,
She soon began to criticise ;—
" A dainty sight, indeed !
I'd be the meanest thing that blows
Rather than that affected rose ;
So much perfume offends my nose,"
Exclaimed the vulgar weed.

" Well, 'tis enough to make one chilly,
To see that pale consumptive lily
Among these painted folks.
Miss Tulip, too, looks wonderous odd,
She's gaping like a dying cod ;—
What a queer stick is golden-rod !
And how the violet pokes !

" Not for the gayest tint that lingers
On honey-suckle's rosy fingers,
Would I with her exchange :
For this, at least, is very clear,
Since they are *there*, and I am *here*,
I occupy a higher sphere—
Enjoy a wider range."

Alas! poor envious weed!—for lo,
That instant came the gardener's hoe,
And lopped her from her sphere:
But none lamented when she fell;
No passing Zephyr sighed farewell;
No friendly Bee would hum her knell;
No Fairy dropt a tear.

While those sweet flowers of genuine worth,
Inclining toward the modest earth,
Adorn the vale below:
Content to hide in sylvan dells,
Their rosy buds and purple bells;
Though scarce a rising Zephyr tells
The secret where they grow.

"I CAN DO WITHOUT IT."

This is one of the best mottos in the world or one of the worst, according to the meaning attached to it: which will appear from the conduct of two young people who were acquainted with each other; each of whom happened to take the above sentence into frequent use. Eliza disliked and ridiculed the manner in which it was applied by Ruth: and Ruth could not but disapprove of the way in which it was used by Eliza. The purpose to which Ruth appropriated the words, and the way in which she came to adopt them as her motto, shall be explained in the present paper.

Her parents were persons of superior education, but their income was limited and narrow; so that they were compelled by their circumstances, as well as inclined by

their good sense, to study economy. Ruth entered into the prudent and sensible views of her parents at an early age; and her general conduct gave them so much satisfaction, that on the day she was fourteen, her mother informed her that from that time she should be intrusted with the purchase and entire management of her own dress; and that her annual allowance would be increased accordingly. The sum now allotted to her was such as her mother considered sufficient, with prudence and management, to meet all her real wants and reasonable wishes.

When Ruth received her first quarterage, the possession of a sum of money so much larger than she had ever been mistress of before, made her feel a little giddy. However, she deposited it safely in her desk, resolving not to touch it till it was really wanted. Economy, her mother told her, did not consist in grudging to supply our wants, but in restraining the desire for superfluities. Not many days after she had entered upon this new responsibility, Ruth accompanied her father and mother to a neighbouring market town, where they frequently went to make purchases, as they lived in the country. She had often been with them on former occasions; but it was with sensations entirely new that she now walked through the busy streets of this town, and passed its long rows of well-furnished shops. Heretofore she had surveyed the various tempting articles they exhibited merely as an amusing *spectacle:* and with no more idea of *possessing* any of them than one has of purchasing the curiosities of a museum. But now circumstances were altered. Here were things, and pretty things too, that she might have if she *pleased.* And

this thought, notwithstanding Ruth's prudent temper and good resolutions, presented itself to her mind temptingly.

The first thing that struck her as a *real desideratum* was a steel purse, of which she saw several, glittering in a jeweller's window. There were also silver ones, but of these she did not allow herself to think. A new purse, now that she had so much more to do with money, appeared very suitable for a first purchase.

"Mamma," said she, touching her mother's elbow, "would you stop one minute? I think I should like one of those purses." Her mother, who was aware that this day's excursion would prove rather trying to her daughter's prudence, replied, "Yes, I will stop a minute; but we will wait *here*, that you may have time to consider, before you go in, whether you *want* a new purse." "To be sure," said Ruth, after a moment's thought, "I have my old silk one; but then——ah well, *I can do without it*," she added; and without giving another look at the shop window, she hastened on.

"Now," said her mother, "you have saved five or six shillings by that moment's consideration."

At this time beaver hats, trimmed with satin, were much worn. There was a capital hatter's in the town: where two large bow windows, furnished with every variety of shade and shape, to suit all fancies, caught the eye of the fair passenger: some loaded with nodding plumes, others with most becoming pink satin linings, and trimmings to match; and some with broad embossed bands, and dangling tassels.

"Mamma," said Ruth again, as they passed this shop, "would you stop one minute? don't you think a beaver hat would be very warm and comfortable for me this

winter ? and besides, how it would save my straw ! This is a very pretty one, is it not ?—just my size I should think :—shall we go in and inquire the price ? "

" If you wish it, we will," replied her mother ; so they entered the shop ; where a genteelly dressed lady was then in the act of purchasing one of the very same shape. Ruth seeing this, jogged her mother, that she might notice such a sanction to her own choice. They now inquired the price of the article in question.

" That hat, ladies, is one guinea, only," said the shopkeeper.

Ruth darted an inquiring look at her mother, to know whether she thought it cheap or dear.

" You recollect your straw hat, I suppose, my dear," said her mother. " Straws, ma'am," interrupted the shopkeeper, " are now considered *uncommonly common ;*— quite *out*, in fact. We have a surprising demand for beavers at the present time ; our manufacturer assures me he cannot get them made up fast enough."

Ruth's respect for *beavers* and contempt of *straws* were wonderfully heightened by this speech.

" Allow me, ma'am," continued he, " to recommend the young lady to try it on." Ruth knowing this would be a hazardous experiment, again looked at her mother ; she then reflected a moment ; (which it must be confessed is a difficult thing to do *dispassionately* in a room full of hats and bonnets) and then whispered to her mother, " I wish we had not come in, for after all, *I could do without it.*" " I am very sorry we have given you any trouble, Sir," said her mother to the shopkeeper, " I believe we shall not purchase one this morning."

The shopkeeper bowed coldly ; and whether he or Ruth felt most disappointed it would be hard to determine.

Soon afterwards her mother had occasion to go to the stationer's. This shop displayed a great variety of articles of different sorts and value, from toys to telescopes. After looking about for some time, Ruth said to her mother, "I am very glad I did not buy a beaver hat, how much better it would be to have something that would *last!* see, are not these pretty?" added she, pointing to some small plated inkstands, "they are only fifteen shillings, I find." Her mother smiled. "Ah, you are thinking of my writing desk: very true; I can certainly *do without it*," continued Ruth; and with this consideration she got safely out of the shop.

Her mother had now finished her business in the town: but as they were returning to the inn, a pastry-cook's window reminded Ruth of a new want. "Mamma," said she, "are not you hungry? I am very; had not we better go in and have something?"

"I thought you brought some biscuits in your basket," said her mother; "True, so I did," said Ruth, "so *we can do without it*."

When they reached the inn, the chaise not being ready, Ruth's mother drew out her pencil, and wrote something on the back of a bill; which she then handed to her daughter, saying, "See my dear, if I have cast this up right." Ruth took the paper, and read the following account.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
A steel purse	0	5	6
Beaver hat	1	1	0
Plated inkstand	0	15	0
Sundry tarts	0	0	10
Total, saved by *doing without it*,	£2	2	4

Ruth smiled, and said, "Yes, mamma, it is quite right; and if it had not been for you I should have been *quite wrong*." "Nay, Ruth," replied her mother, "I must give you some credit this morning, for having yielded so easily to my suggestion: prudence does not consist in not being tempted, but in not *yielding* to temptation. Yes, you have saved at least 2*l*. 2*s*. 4*d*. this morning by the timely use of those few simple words; and I think they would form an excellent motto for you, now that you are entrusted with the disposal of money." "Yes," said Ruth, quite delighted, "*I can do without it:* this shall be my motto; I will write it on the lid of my money box; it is an excellent motto, mamma!"

When Ruth returned home, she was pleased to think not only that she had saved her money, but that not one of the articles she had wished for was really wanted. She now congratulated herself that, to the mere pleasure of novelty, which would have lasted but a few hours, she had not sacrificed a sum which would, by and bye, purchase things that she would really want, and that she could *not* do without. Unnecessary expences always rob either ourselves or others: we either deprive ourselves of something essential to our comfort afterwards; or defraud the poor and destitute of their just claims. *Economy* and *liberality* go hand in hand.

Ruth found, during many future years, that the motto thus early adopted, was of excellent use as a check upon her expenditure: indeed it led her to form habits of self-denial which were of essential importance to her during life. She was always dressed with a graceful simplicity, far more pleasing to persons of good sense and good taste than a more studied style; and thus, by

purchasing only such things as she could not with comfort and propriety do without, she had always a little overplus with which to relieve her poor neighbours, and for other useful purposes. "Ah," said she to her mother, as she was making up a flannel gown for an old *goody* who was '*sadly bad of the rheumatize*,' "poor Betty Brown would have been obliged *to do without this*, if I had not sometimes recollected *I can do without it*."

There is no danger of economy degenerating into covetousness, when what is saved from our needless gratification is devoted to the real wants of others.

"If I had not remembered my motto," thought she, on another occasion, "when the man called yesterday with his box of lace, I should not have had three and six pence to spare for this Bible to day. And O, how much better I can do without a piece of lace to my frock, than my poor neighbour can do without a *Bible!*"

How many a superfluous article of dress, how many a trifle that wearies or disgusts almost as soon as possessed —how many a needless and injurious dainty to please the palate would be dispensed with, and how many more of the destitute might be relieved, if persons would but recollect, and recollect in *time*, Ruth's excellent motto— "*I can do without it.*"

THE SORE TONGUE.

THERE was a little girl called Fanny, who had the misfortune one day to bite her tongue as she was eating her breakfast. It hurt her so much that she could scarcely help crying; and even when the first smart was over it continued so sore that whenever she spoke it

pained her considerably. Finding this to be the case, she said very pitifully to her mother, "Mamma, you can't think how it hurts me when I speak!" "Does it?" replied her mother, "then I'll tell you what I would advise you to do;—resolve all this day to say nothing but what is either *necessary* or *useful;* this will give your tongue a fine holiday, and may answer more purposes than one."

Fanny, knowing that she had the character of being somewhat loquacious, could not help laughing at this; and said, "Well, I will try for once; so, mum; I am going to begin now, mamma."

Mother. Do so; and whenever you are beginning to speak, be sure you ask yourself whether what you were going to say was likely to be of any use, or whether it was necessary.

Fanny. Yes, yes, I will: but don't talk to me, mamma, for fear:—so saying, she screwed up her lips, and taking her work, sat for about five minutes as still as a mouse. She then looked up, smiled, and nodded at her mother, as much as to say "see how well I can hold my tongue," still screwing her lips very tight for fear she should speak. Soon however she began to feel a great inclination to say something; and was glad to recollect that if she could but think of any thing either useful or necessary, she might speak. Whereupon she endeavoured to find something to say that would come *within the act.* To aid her invention, she looked all round the room:—

Fanny. Mamma, don't you think the fire wants stirring? (This question, she thought, savoured of both qualifications.)

MOTHER. Not at present, my dear.

Then followed another long silence: for Fanny found it vastly more difficult than she had any previous idea of, to think of any thing useful to talk about; and she knew her mamma would laugh at her if she said what was obviously idle or silly, just now. She was beginning to repent having made such an agreement, when her three elder sisters entered the room. She now thought it quite reasonable, if not absolutely *necessary*, to tell them of her misfortune, which she did at considerable length, and with many needless digressions; (the usual custom with great talkers) upon which they all laughed; prophesying that her resolution would not last half an hour; and rallying her for telling such a long story with a sore tongue.

Soon after, some ladies called to pay their mother a morning visit. This gave Fanny's tongue such a long rest, that the moment they were gone it seemed irresistibly to resume its wonted functions.

FANNY. What a while old Mrs. W. has had that brown satin pelisse! Really, poor old lady, I am quite tired of seeing her in it!

MOTHER. How is your tongue, Fanny?

FANNY. O, better, mamma, thank you, almost well.

MOTHER. I am sorry for it: I was in hopes it would have been sore enough at least to prevent your making impertinent remarks upon any body all this day.

FANNY. No but really, mamma, is it not an old rubbishing thing?

MOTHER. I don't know, indeed: it is no business of mine; therefore I took no notice of it.

A silence ensued after this: but conversation revived

when Caroline, who had stood for some time with her eyes fixed on their opposite neighbour's window, suddenly exclaimed, "I do believe the Jones's are going to have company again to day! the servant has just been lighting the fire in the drawing-room; and there is Miss Jones now gone up to dress: I saw her draw down the blinds in her room this instant." "So she is," said Lucy, looking up: "I never knew such people in my life! they are always having company."

"I wonder who they are expecting to day!" said Eliza, "dinner company, I suppose."

The proceedings of their neighbours, the Jones's, continued to furnish matter for various sagacious conjectures and remarks for a considerable time; at length Caroline exclaimed with the eagerness of discovery—

"Look! look! there's the baker now at the door, with a whole tray full of tarts and things: make haste, or he'll be gone in."

Lucy. So he is, I declare; it *is* a dinner-party then: well, we shall see presently, I hope, who are coming.

Caroline. O no, they never dine till five, when they have company.

Eliza. And it will be dark then; how tiresome!

Lucy. If Miss Jones is not dressed already! she is this instant come into the drawing-room.

Caroline. Stand back, stand back! don't let her see us all staring: ah, there she is;—got on her pink sarcenet body and sleeves to day:—how pretty that dress is, to be sure!

Eliza. And how nicely she has done her hair; look Caroline—braided behind.

Lucy. There, she is putting down the sash. That chimney smokes, I know, with this wind.

Fanny. And there is that little figure, Martha Jones, come down now : do look, as broad as she is long : what a little fright that child is, to be sure ! .

Mother. Pray, Fanny, was that remark—*useful or necessary ?*

Fanny. O but mamma, I assure you, my tongue is quite well now.

Mother. I am sorry for it, my dear. Do you know, I should think it well worth while to bite my tongue every day, if there were no other means of keeping it in order.

At this the girls laughed ; but their mother resuming her gravity, thus continued :

" My dear girls, I should before now have put a stop to this idle gossipping, if I had not hoped to convince you of the folly of it. It is no wonder, I confess, that at your age you should learn to imitate a style of remark which is but too prevalent in society.—Nothing indeed is more contagious : but let me also tell you, that girls of your age, and of your *advantages*, are capable of seeing the meanness of it : and ought to despise it. It is the chief end of education to raise the minds of women above such trifling as this. But if a young person who has been taught to *think*, whose taste has been cultivated, and who might therefore possess internal resources, has as much idle curiosity about the affairs of her neighbours, and is as fond of retailing petty scandal concerning them, as an uneducated woman, it proves that her mind is incurably mean and vulgar, and that cultivation is lost upon her.

" This sort of gossipping, my dear girls, is the disgrace of our sex. The pursuits of women lying necessarily within a narrow sphere, they naturally sink, unless raised by refinement, or by strong principle, into that *littleness of character* for which, even their own husbands and fathers (if they are men of sense) are tempted to despise them. The minds of men, from their engagements in business, necessarily take a larger range; and they are, in general, too much occupied with concerns comparatively important, to enter into the minute details which amuse women. But women of education have no such plea to urge. When your father and I direct you to this or that pursuit, it is not so much for the sake of your possessing that particular branch of knowledge; but that by knowledge *in general*, you may become intelligent and superior; and that you may be furnished with resources which will save you from the *miserable necessity* of seeking amusement from intercourse with your neighbours, and an acquaintance with their affairs.

" Let us suppose, now, that this morning you had been all more industriously inclined; and had been engaged in any of your employments with that ardour which some happy young people manifest in the acquisition of knowledge; would you, in that case, have felt any desire to know the date of Mrs. W.'s pelisse: or any curiosity in the proceedings of our neighbours the Jones's? No: you would then have thought it a most impertinent interruption, if any one had attempted to entertain you with such particulars: but when the mind is indolent and empty, then it can receive amusement from the most contemptible sources. Learn then, to check this

mean propensity. Despise such thoughts whenever you are tempted to indulge them: recollect that this low curiosity is the combined result of idleness, ignorance, emptiness and ill-nature; and fly to useful *occupation* as the most successful antidote against the evil. Nor let it be forgotten, that such impertinent remarks as these come directly under the description of those "*idle words*," of which an account must be given in the day of judgment. Yes, this vulgar trifling is as inconsistent with the spirit of Christian benevolence, and with the grand rule of "doing to others as we would that they should do to us," as it is with refinement of taste and dignity of character."

"Who would have thought," said little Fanny, "that my happening to bite my tongue this morning, would have led to all this?"

"It would be a fortunate *bite* for you, Fanny," said her mother, "and for your *neighbours*, if it should make you more careful in the use of it. If we were liable to such a misfortune whenever we use our tongues improperly, some persons would be in a constant agony:—now, if our consciences were but half as sensible as our nerves, they would answer the purpose much better.—Foolish talking pains a *good* conscience, just as continual speaking hurts a sore tongue; and if we did but regard one smart as much as the other, it would act as a constant check upon the unruly member."

THE DISCONTENTED PENDULUM.

An old clock that had stood for fifty years in a farmer's kitchen without giving its owner any cause of complaint, early one summer's morning, before the family was stirring, suddenly stopped.

Upon this, the dial-plate (if we may credit the fable) changed countenance with alarm: the hands made an ineffectual effort to continue their course: the wheels remained motionless with surprise; the weights hung speechless; each member felt disposed to lay the blame on the others. At length the dial instituted a formal inquiry as to the cause of the stagnation; when hands, wheels, weights, with one voice, protested their innocence. But now a faint tick was heard below, from the pendulum, who thus spoke:—

"I confess myself to be the sole cause of the present stoppage; and am willing, for the general satisfaction, to assign my reasons. The truth is, that I am tired of ticking." Upon hearing this, the old clock became so enraged that it was on the point of *striking*.

"Lazy wire!" exclaimed the dial-plate, holding up its hands.

"Very good!" replied the pendulum, "it is vastly easy for you, Mistress Dial, who have always, as every body knows, set yourself up above me—it is vastly easy for you, I say, to accuse other people of laziness! You, who have had nothing to do all the days of your life but to stare people in the face, and to amuse yourself with watching all that goes on in the kitchen! Think, I beseech you, how you would like to be shut up for life

in this dark closet, and wag backwards and forwards, year after year, as I do."

"As to that," said the dial, "is there not a window in your house on purpose for you to look through?"

"For all that," resumed the pendulum, "it is very dark here: and although there is a window, I dare not stop, even for an instant, to look out. Besides, I am really weary of my way of life; and if you please, I'll tell you how I took this disgust at my employment. This morning I happened to be calculating how many times I should have to tick in the course only of the next twenty-four hours: perhaps some of you, above there, can give me the exact sum."

The minute hand, being *quick at figures*, instantly replied, "Eighty-six thousand, four hundred times."

"Exactly so," replied the pendulum: "well, I appeal to you all, if the thought of this was not enough to fatigue one? and when I began to multiply the strokes of one day by those of months and years, really it is no wonder if I felt discouraged at the prospect: so after a great deal of reasoning and hesitation, thinks I to myself—I'll stop."

The dial could scarcely keep its countenance during this harangue; but, resuming its gravity, thus replied:—

"Dear Mr. Pendulum, I am really astonished that such a useful, industrious person as yourself should have been overcome by this sudden suggestion. It is true you have done a great deal of work in your time. So we have all, and are likely to do; and although this may fatigue us to *think* of, the question is, whether it will fatigue us to *do:* would you now do me the favour

to give about half a dozen strokes, to illustrate my argument ? "

The pendulum complied, and ticked six times at its usual pace :—" Now," resumed the dial, " may I be allowed to inquire, if that exertion was at all fatiguing or disagreeable to you ? "

" Not in the least," replied the pendulum ;—" it is not of six strokes that I complain, nor of sixty, but of *millions*."

" Very good," replied the dial, " but recollect that although you may *think* of a million strokes in an instant, you are required to *execute* but one ; and that however often you may hereafter have to swing, a moment will always be given you to swing in."

" That consideration staggers me, I confess," said the pendulum.

" Then I hope," resumed the dial-plate, " we shall all immediately return to our duty ; for the maids will lie in bed till noon if we stand idling thus."

Upon this, the weights, who had never been accused of *light* conduct, used all their influence in urging him to proceed : when, as with one consent, the wheels began to turn, the hands began to move, the pendulum began to wag, and, to its credit, ticked as loud as ever ; while a beam of the rising sun that streamed through a hole in the kitchen shutter, shining full upon the dial-plate, it brightened up as if nothing had been the matter.

When the farmer came down to breakfast that morning, upon looking at the clock he declared that his watch had gained half an hour in the night.

THE WORM AND THE SNAIL.

A Fable.

A LITTLE worm too close that played
In contact with a gardener's spade,
Writhing about in sudden pain,
Perceived that he was cut in twain ;
His nether half, left short and free,
Much doubting its identity.
However, when the shock was past,
New circling rings were formed so fast,
By nature's hand which fails her never,
That soon he was as long as ever.
But yet the insult and the pain
This little reptile did retain,
In what, in man, is called the brain.
One fine spring evening, bright and wet,
Ere yet the April sun was set,
When slimy reptiles crawl and coil
Forth from the soft and humid soil,
He left his subterranean clay
To move along the gravelly way ;
Where suddenly his course was stopt
By something on the path that dropt ;
When, with precaution and surprise,
He straight shrunk up to half his size.
That 'twas a stone was first his notion,
But soon discovering loco-motion,
He recognized the coat of mail,
And wary antlers of a snail,
Which some young rogue (we beg his pardon)
Had flung into his neighbour's garden.

The snail all shattered and infirm,
Deplored his fate, and told the worm.
" Alas ! " says he, " I know it well,
All this is owing to my shell :
They could not send me up so high,
Describing circles in the sky,
But that, on this account, 'tis known
I bear resemblance to a stone :
Would I could rid me of my case,
And find a tenant for the place !
I'll make it known to all my kin ;—
' This house to let—inquire within.' "
" Good ! " says the worm, " the bargain's struck ;
I take it, and admire my luck :
That shell, from which you'd fain be free,
Is just the very thing for me.
Oft have I wished, when danger calls,
For such impervious castle walls.
Both for defence and shelter made,
From greedy crow, and murderous spade :
Yes, neighbour snail, I'll hire the room,
And pay my rent when strawberries come."
" Do," says the snail, " and I'll declare,
You'll find the place in good repair ;
With winding ways that will not fail
To accommodate your length of tail."
(This fact the wily rogue concealing—
The fall had broken in his ceiling.)
" O," says the sanguine worm, " I knew
That I might safely deal with you."
Thus was the tenement transferred,
And that without another word.

Off went the snail in houseless plight ;
Alas ! it proved a frosty night,
And ere a peep of morning light,
One wish supreme he found prevail ;—
(In all the world this foolish snail
Saw nothing he would like so well)—
Which was—that he had got a shell.
But soon for this he ceased to sigh :
A little duck came waddling by,
Who having but a youthful bill,
Had ventured not so large a pill
(E'en at imperious hunger's call)
As this poor reptile, house and all.
But finding such a dainty bite
All ready to his appetite,
Down went the snail, whose last lament,
Mourned his deserted tenement.

Meantime the worm had spent his strength,
In vain attempts to curl his length
His small apartment's space about ;
For head or tail must needs stick out.
Now, if this last was left, 'twas more
Exposed to danger than before,
And 'twould be vastly strange, he said,
To sit in doors without one's head.
Alas ! he now completely bears
The unknown weight of household cares ;
And wishes much some kind beholder
Would take the burthen off his shoulder.

Now broke the dawn ; and soon with fear,
Feeling the shock of footsteps near,
He tried to reach that wished for goal,

The shelter of a neighbouring hole ;
Which proved, when danger threatened sore,
A certain refuge heretofore.
But failed him now this last resort :
His new appendage stopt him short :
For all his efforts would not do
To force it in, or drag it through.
Oh then, poor worm ! what words can say
How much he wished his shell away !
But wishes all were vain, for oh !
The garden roller, dreaded foe !
Came growling by, and did not fail,
To crush our hero, head and tail,
—Just when the duck devoured the snail.

Thus says the fable :—learn from hence,
It argues want of common sense,
To think our trials and our labours,
Harder and heavier than our neighbours' :
Or that 'twould lighten toils and cares,
To give them ours in change for theirs ;
For whether man's appointed lot
Be really equalized or not,
(A point we need not now discuss,)
Habit makes ours the best to us.

THE MOTH.

A MILD September evening—twilight already stealing over the landscape, shades yonder sloping corn-field, whence the merry reapers have this day borne away the last sheaf. A party of gleaners have since gathered up the precious fragments. Now all are gone; the harvest moon is up; a low mist rising from the river floats in the valley. There is a gentle stirring amongst the leaves of the tall elm that shades our roof—all besides is still.—The grey and quiet scene invites reflection.

Wishing the reader to participate in our meditations, we were in the very act of committing to paper some sage considerations on the departure of another summer—but a very small and elegant moth, attracted by the candles, has this moment descended on the sheet, within an inch of our pen, and with the light stroke of his wing has broken our thread of thought—will the reader excuse it if it break his also?

The delicacy and perfection of its form, the exquisite lace-work of its airy wing, its swift and noiseless movements, a body nearly as ethereal and unincumbered as if it were a soul, its independence, its innocence, awaken admiration—and (contrasted with the inertness and languor with which our cumbrous frames are often oppressed) might excite envy too.

Who can guess what are its imaginings concerning the extensive plain on which it has just arrived? Is it a field of dazzling light, an enchanted region of pleasure and brightness? He flutters his wings as though his dreams of joy were at length realized. From the dun shades of the evening without, he has suddenly launched

into a new world of magic splendour, illumined with radiant suns. How little does he think (of this at least we may be sure) that this shining plain is no other than a sheet of foolscap!—that those glorious suns are inglorious candles!—such are the illusions of moths!

It would be very desirable, some young reader may think, if it were possible, to undeceive him; and supposing him capable of understanding it, to rectify all his mistakes, by addressing him in some such language as this:—"You are only a *moth;* and you have no idea what insignificant things moths are! you know nothing at all: you can't imagine what an astonishing number of things there are that you have not even heard of. *We* think nothing of you; *we* are really of importance; but you are of no importance, you are only an insect. You sometimes do us mischief by eating holes in our clothes, and very tiresome it is that such little creatures as you should be able to do *us* mischief: having this opportunity, I must desire you not to do so any more, for what you eat is not at all nice; it is cloth, not food; why should you eat *cloth?* I wish you would mention this to all your relations: and as to the place that you now are upon, it is nothing in the world but a sheet of paper that a person is writing on: but you don't know what writing means, I dare say; indeed it is no use talking to you, you are so extremely ignorant, moth."—With a few variations, how suitable would be such an address to some things that are *not* moths! And to beings a little higher than ourselves in the scale of reason, how similar to those of the moth must appear the illusions of men? How many of the objects of our ardent pursuit are as destitute of intrinsic excellence,

as empty of happiness as *we* know the glare of the light to be in which an insect so joyously flutters its wings! It does not, indeed, require the intellect of an angel to know this—experience teaches it, at last, even to dull scholars.—Children can laugh at the folly of an insect: youths soon learn to ridicule the toys and sports of children; men smile at the vanities of youth; wise men at the pleasures of weak men—and not seldom at their own; while angels look down with surprise and pity on all—smiling most at the mistakes of the man, and least at those of the moth!

Fortunately enough for our moral, the little hero of the piece has this moment expired in the flame of the candle, and that in spite of the most praiseworthy exertions on our part to deter him from the rash adventure. In vain we whisked our quill in every dissuasive attitude; (an employment, by the way, to which we are but too much accustomed) he was resolved—and could he have given utterance to his feelings, no doubt he would have expressed his certain persuasion that it must be a desirable and a delightful thing to sport in that elegant flame. Who can witness this common catastrophe without observing the analogy, and reading the oft-told moral? Even if it had not scorched a single feather, if he could have lived there, still, we could assure him, he could not *find happiness in a candle.* He would have been a thousand times more comfortable, as well as more safe, hid in the dark folds of the curtain, or fixed within the protection of some broad shadow on the wall, or in any of the natural and customary haunts of his species. So it is with all unsanctioned pleasures; even if they were not dangerous they would be dis-

appointing—but we know they are both the one and the other.

How quickly was that most complete and delicate machine destroyed! an engine which not the united sagacity and ingenuity of man could restore! No wonder that so fine and fragile a creature should be liable to swift destruction :—but let not the strong glory in their strength, for behold "*we* are crushed *before* the moth."

THE MOTH'S SONG.

Ah! what shall I do,
To express unto you
What I think, what I feel, what I know and pursue!

With my elegant face,
And my wing of lace,
How lightly the motes of the evening I chase!

Though I am but a moth
And feed upon cloth,
To me it is pleasant and nourishing both.

And this region of light,
So broad and so bright,
It makes my heart dance with a strange delight!

If dismal to you,
'Tis the best of the two,
For O! it is pleasant, this wide-shining view!

There are lights afar,
More bright than a star,
You say they are candles—I'll see if they are.

I go, and I fly,
And so good bye!
Ah me! what is it?—I die! I die!

THE TOAD'S JOURNAL.

It is related by Mr. Belzoni in the interesting narrative of his late discoveries in Egypt, that having succeeded in clearing a passage to the entrance of an ancient temple, which had been for ages buried in the sand, the first object that presented itself, upon entering, was a toad of enormous size; and (if we may credit the assertions of some naturalists respecting the extraordinary longevity of these creatures, when in a state of solitary confinement) we may believe that it was well stricken in years.

Whether the subjoined document was entrusted to our traveller by the venerable reptile as a present to the British Museum, or with the more mercantile view of getting it printed in London, in preference to Alexandria, on condition of receiving one per cent on the profits, after the sale of the 500th edition, (provided the publisher should by that time be at all remunerated for his risk and trouble,) we pretend not to say. Quite as much as can be vouched for is, the MSS. being faithfully rendered from the original hieroglyphic character.

(*The dates are omitted.*)

—"Crawled forth from some rubbish, and wink'd with
one eye;
Half opened the other, but could not tell why:
Stretched out my left leg, as it felt rather queer,
Then drew all together and slept for a year.
Awakened, felt chilly—crept under a stone;
Was vastly contented with living alone.
One toe became wedged in the stone like a peg,
Could not get it away—had the cramp in my leg:

Began half to wish for a neighbour at hand
To loosen the stone, which was fast in the sand;
Pull'd harder—then dozed, as I found 'twas no use;—
Awoke the next summer, and lo! it was loose.
Crawled forth from the stone, when completely awake;
Crept into a corner, and grinned at a snake.
Retreated, and found that I needed repose;
Curled up my damp limbs and prepared for a doze:
Fell sounder to sleep than was usual before,
And did not awake for a century or more;
But had a sweet dream, as I rather believe:—
Methought it was light, and a fine summer's eve;
And I in some garden deliciously fed,
In the pleasant moist shade of a strawberry bed.
There fine speckled creatures claimed kindred with me,
And others that hopped, most enchanting to see.
Here long I regaled with emotion extreme;—
Awoke—disconcerted to find it a dream;
Grew pensive;—discovered that life is a load;
Began to be weary of being a toad:
Was fretful at first, and then shed a few tears."—
Here ends the account of the first thousand years.

MORAL.

To find a moral where there's none
Is hard indeed, yet must be done:
Since only morals sound and sage
May grace this consecrated page:
Then give us leave to search a minute,
Perhaps for one that is not in it.

How strange a waste of life appears
This wondrous reptile's length of years !
Age after age afforded him
To wink an eye, or move a limb,
To doze and dream ;—and then to think
Of noting this with pen and ink ;
Or hieroglyphic shapes to draw,
More likely, with his hideous claw ;
Sure length of days might be bestowed
On something better than a toad !
Had his existence been eternal
What better could have filled his journal ?
True, we reply ; our ancient friend
Seems to have lived to little end ;
This must be granted ;—nay the elf
Seems to suspect as much himself.
Refuse not then to find a teacher
In this extraordinary creature :
And learn at least, whoe'er you be,
To moralize as well as he.
It seems that life is all a void,
On selfish thoughts alone employed ;
That length of days is not a good,
Unless their use be understood ;
While if good deeds one year engage,
That may be longer than an age ;
But if a year in trifles go,
Perhaps you'd spend a thousand so.
Time cannot stay to make us wise,
We must improve it as it flies ;
The work is ours, and they shall rue it
Who think that time will stop to do it.

And then, again, he lets us know
That length of days is length of woe.
His long experience taught him this,
That life affords no solid bliss :
Or if of bliss on earth you scheme,
Soon you shall find it but a dream ;
The visions fade, the slumbers break,
And then you suffer wide awake.
What is it but a vale of tears,
Though we should live a thousand years ?

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